

# Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

<http://www.ntbc.org.uk/>

**Bulletin 2015 No 1**

**MONTHLY SUMMARY JANUARY 2016**

**15th March 2016**



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St Mary's Island Hide

A popular bird  
Coues' Arctic Redpoll

by Stewart Sexton

Warkworth



## CLASSIFIED LIST HIGHLIGHTS

Tundra Bean Goose  
Dark-bellied Brent Goose  
Mandarin  
American Wigeon  
Teal  
Green-winged Teal  
Black Scoter  
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Bittern  
Red-necked Grebe  
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Marsh Harrier  
Knot  
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Greenshank  
Long-billed Dowitcher  
Pomarine Skua  
Great Skua  
Little Auk  
Little Gull  
Hooded Crow  
Black Redstart  
Water Pipit  
Coues' Arctic Redpoll  
Lapland Bunting

One or two at Big Waters, Earsdon, Holywell Pond and Low Newton.  
Ten at Druridge on 10th were unusual. Presumed influx from further south.  
Single at Holywell Pond from 9th to 21st.  
Male at Grindon Lough from 3rd.  
Site record count of 1,493 at Big Waters on 21st.  
Drake at Backworth and Swallow Pond from 7th to 14th.  
Male at Stag Rocks, Bamburgh.  
Sightings of same individual at several localities though mainly Killingworth Lake.  
Singles noted at Gosforth Park and East Chevington.  
Close views of one at Monks' House Pool from 9th to 15th.  
One at Druridge Bay CP on 7th and one at East Chevington from 25th.  
The female at East Chevington still wintering.  
Three at Prestwick Carr were very unusual inland on 4th.  
One on pelagic off Seahouses / Bamburgh on 17th.  
One at Budle Bay on 1st only.  
The first-winter remained at Cresswell Pond all month.  
Unusual mid-winter record at Tweed Estuary on 5th.  
Several unusual mid-winter sightings.  
Large movement early in month with 300 S at Stag Rocks on 5th.  
Wreck early in month with sightings at many localities.  
One at Holy Island causeway on 21st.  
Singles at Holy Island and Tynemouth.  
One or two in Druridge / East Chevington area and at Monks' House Pool.  
One at Warkworth proved a major highlight in the month.  
Only record was one on Holy Island on 31st.

## INDOOR MEETINGS

NTBC indoor meetings are held at Northern Rugby Club, McCracken Park, Great North Road, Newcastle, NE3 2DT starting at 7.00pm and generally finish between 9.00pm-9.30pm. The next meeting of the 2015-2016 season is:

April 14th 2016

### Brian Sykes – West Papua

A talk of an exciting trip to the little-visited West Papua.

## FIELD TRIPS

24th April 2016

### Langholm

Contact Steve Anderson for details [seaswan@btinternet.com](mailto:seaswan@btinternet.com)

15th May 2016

### Kielder

Contact Martin Davison for details [martindavison@gmail.com](mailto:martindavison@gmail.com)

23rd May 2016

### Geltsdale

Contact Trevor Blake for details [trevor.1958@live.co.uk](mailto:trevor.1958@live.co.uk)

## CLASSIFIED LIST

The following account consists of unchecked reports. The species/subspecies marked \* require descriptions.

A complete list of all sightings that need notes is included in the NTBC website [www.ntbc.org.uk](http://www.ntbc.org.uk) under the County Records Committee section and in Birds in Northumbria 2013 page 233.

The Inland and Coastal Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) tables are at the rear of the bulletin. These contain counts additional to those in the Classified List.

### Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

QEII CP held a peak of 150 on 2nd (TD), 83 were at Capheaton Lake on 21st (EC), 52 at the Tweed Estuary on 13th (MHu), and 47 at Killingworth Lake on 5th (LJM). Ten to 17 were also at Birling Carrs, East Chevington and Howdon, and five to nine at Beal, Bolam Lake, Haughton Strother GP, Prestwick Carr and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. One to four were at about 15 further sites, including one at Scotswood.

### Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

A count of 74 at Loanend (Horncliffe) on 31st included 14 juveniles (MHu), 36 were at Birling Carrs (Warkworth) on 24th (IBDa/KDa), 22 (two juveniles) at Warkworth Lane Ponds on 26th (MH/AA), and ten at Grindon Lough on 19th (MRS). Six to eight were at East Chevington and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, three to four at/over Albemarle, Beal, Druridge, Hauxley Reserve, Prestwick Carr, West Ord and Widdrington Moor Lake, and one to two at Backworth, Craggside, Cresswell Pond, Gosforth Park NR, Killingworth Lake and Shield on the Wall.

### Bean Goose *Anser fabalis*

Birds of the 'Tundra' *rossicus* race included two at Low Newton scrape on 13th (TRD/JD) and one there on 15th when it was seen to fly off to S (PRM *et al.*), one (first-winter) at Holywell Pond on 17th (CDB/MSH) and 19th (SPP), one at the *Beehive* flash on 22nd (AC), and one regularly at Big Waters between 24th-31st (GB/ISD/AJJ).



The first-winter Tundra Bean Goose at Holywell

• by Chris Barlow

### **Pink-footed Goose** *Anser brachyrhynchus*

A total of 460 flew N at East Ord on 21st (MHu), while 80-150 flew W at Big Waters, East Chevington and Hexham on three dates between 8th-31st, 90 N at Cramlington on 17th and 45 S at Scremerston. An estimated 4,000 were at Druridge on 19th (MSH), 3,000 were at nearby Hemscott Hill on 17th (TB), 1,500 at Cresswell Pond on 13th (TB), and 500 at Low Hauxley (JMA). A flock in the Gloucester Lodge (Blyth)-Old Hartley area numbered 200-400 between 14th-19th (RJP) and 800-825 on 25th and 31st (MSH), 600 were at Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay) on 18th (MNC), and 240 at Low Newton. In the north of the county, 2,000 were at Goswick on 23rd (JMA), 500 at Haggerston (JMA), 100-200 at Cocklawburn and Embleton Bog, and 'hundreds' at Lowick on 10th (PB/NNBC). One to five were at Birling Carrs, Prestwick Carr and St Mary's. A neck-collared individual (EJ77) was at Low Newton on 12th (MH/AA).



Pinkfeet at Holywell by Chris Barlow

### **White-fronted Goose** *Anser flavirostris*

Well-reported. Eurasian *albifrons* race birds involved 16 at West Ord on 13th (BWG), six adults at Gloucester Lodge (Blyth) on 12th (STH), six at Hemscott Hill (Cresswell) on 17th (TB) and one to two on 20th-21st (TB/IK), six (three adults) at Low Newton scrape on 15th (STH/PRM) and two on 13th (TRD/JD), five (three adults) at Druridge on 19th (MSH) and one to three on 15th and 23rd (TF/JFa/MSH), four adults at Backworth-Holywell Grange between 8th-16th (PRM/MSH/CGK *et al.*), three W of Cresswell Pond on 23rd (ADMc), two near Brier Dene Farm on 25th (MSH), two at East Chevington on 31st (TF/JFa), and two at Holywell Pond on 17th (CDB/MSH *et al.*).

Birds of the Greenland *flavirostris* race included five adults at Warkworth Lane on 26th (MH/AA), three at Grindon Lough on 13th (SJH), three at Woodhorn on 21st (ADMc), and one to two at Cresswell Pond on 13th and 16th (TB/TF/JFa).

Un-raced birds involved three at Druridge Pools on 16th (TF/JFa) and one to two near Earsdon, Gloucester Lodge (Blyth), Holywell Pond and Maiden's Hall Lake (the latter possibly *albifrons*).



White-fronted Geese  
East Chevington  
31st January by Jonathan Farooqi



**Greylag Goose** *Anser anser*

Peak counts involved 340 at Derwent Reservoir on 17th (IFo), 330 at Yarrow Slake on 9th (BWG), 290 at Druridge Bay on 17th (AJR), 150-170 at East Holywell (MNC) and Low Newton (PRM), 100-145 at Backworth, East Chevington, Haughton Strother GP and Holywell Pond, and 56 at Newham Bog. Counts of 13-17 came from Brier Dene Farm, Grindon Lough, Holy Island and Monks' House Pool, and one to seven at Bothal and Coanwood Ponds, Cocklawburn, Eachwick and Fenham Flats.

**Canada Goose** *Branta canadensis*

Grindon Lough again attracted large numbers, with a peak of 565 on 19th (MRS), and 19-341 on various dates between 3rd-27th (SJH/PRM *et al.*). Peak counts elsewhere involved 162 at Bothal Pond on 24th (TF/JFa), 117 at Big Waters on 7th (GB), 54-70 at Druridge Pools, Killingworth Lake and QEII CP, and 34-46 at Bolam Lake and the Tweed Estuary. Groups of 16-20 were at Derwent Reservoir, Holywell, Newcastle Leazes Park and Prestwick Carr.

**Barnacle Goose** *Branta leucopsis*

Budle Bay held 810 on 17th (CGK/GPK/PS) and 80-100 were at nearby Harper's Heugh on 1st (NNBC) and 9th (GB/DM/LAR). Other peak counts were 125 at Goswick on 15th (per NNBC), 70 at Ross on 15th (MJC) and 48 at Haughton Strother GP (MR). Five to ten were also at Druridge Pools and Hemscott Hill, and singles at Backworth and Gloucester Lodge (Blyth).

**Brent Goose** *Branta bernicla*

Pale-bellied *hrota* race birds involved nine N at Seaton Sluice between 4th-6th (SSWT), 640 at Holy Island causeway on 15th (PRM), and 120 at Harper's Haugh (Budle Bay) on 23rd (TRD/JD).

Dark-bellied *bernicla* race birds included five which flew S at Cocklawburn beach on 1st (MSH), 15 at Budle Bay on 17th (CGK/GPK/PS), ten at Druridge Pools on 10th (TRD/TF/JFa) and seven on 11th (MSH), and one to two at Gloucester Lodge (Blyth) and Backworth.

Un-raced birds involved 1,500 at Fenham Flats (NNBC), 500 feeding on pasture (possibly indicating a lack of *Zostera* Eelgrass) at Beal Farm on 16th (IK), 300-350 at Lindisfarne NNR all month (IK), 50 at Harper's Heugh and 14 at Whitley Bay.

**Shelduck** *Tadorna tadorna*

Peak counts were 600 at Fenham Flats on 1st (MSH), 565 at Holy Island causeway on 15th (PRM), 205 at Budle Bay on 21st (PRM), 23 at Howdon (CB/JGS), and 11-13 at Boulmer, North Shields and Widdrington Moor Lake. Three were at Swallow Pond between 25th-27th (GPK/SPP), and one to two at Bothal and Holywell Ponds, Brier Dene Farm, Castle Island and Widdrington Moor Lake. Further inland, one was at Haughton Strother GP on 8th (MR).

**Mandarin** *Aix galericulata*

A drake was at Holywell Pond on three dates between 9th-21st (JMA/CDB/TB/DLo *et al.*).

**Wigeon** *Anas penelope*

The Fenham Flats area of Lindisfarne NNR held 2,300 on 12th (JDL/IBDa/KDa), 624 at Big Waters on 8th was a site record (AJJ per GB), 620 were at Budle Bay on 21st (PRM), 532 at Grindon Lough on 19th (MRS), 480 at Cresswell Pond (AJR), and 200-330 at Bell's Pond-Hemscott Hill, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Pools and Widdrington Moor Lake. Counts of 110-185 came from Bothal Pond, Gosforth Park NR, Low Newton and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, 50 were at Boulmer and the Coquet Estuary, and 20-24 were at Prestwick Carr and the Tweed Estuary.

**American Wigeon** *Anas Americana*

A drake found at Grindon Lough on 3rd (PRM) was reported on three further dates between 7th-21st (TRD/JD/SJH).

**Gadwall** *Anas strepera*

The largest concentrations were in the south-eastern quarter of the county and involved peaks of 42 at Big Waters on 24th (AJJ per GB), 35 at Bothal Pond on 17th (TF/JFa), 33 at the Blyth Estuary on 17th (LJM), 31 at Swallow Pond on 21st (GPK), 27 (including a displaying pair) at Arcot Pond (LJM), and 12-14 at Caistron, Druridge Pools, East Chevington and Widdrington Moor Lake. Five to nine were at Holywell Pond and Marden Quarry, three and four at Hedgeley GP, Killingworth Lake, Prestwick Carr and Swallow Pond, and one to two at Backworth Pond, Branton GP, Derwent and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, Howdon, Ladyburn Lake and QEII CP.

**Teal** *Anas crecca*

22 flew N at Meadow Haven, Berwick on 5th (MHu). Big Waters attracted a site record of 1,246 on 17th which increased to 1,493 on 21st (GB/AJJ). Other peak site counts were 500 at Holy Island (Lough/'rocket field') all month (IK), 457 at Grindon Lough on 13th (SJH), 385 at Budle Bay on 21st (PRM), 211-240 at Druridge Pools (PRM) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs (SR), and 100-150 at Arcot and Bothal Ponds, Howdon, Low Newton and Prestwick Carr. Groups of 51-94 were also at Castle Island, Colwell, Middle Ord and Swallow Ponds, and Widdrington Moor Lake, and 28-48 at Amble, Backworth Pond, Dunstanburgh, Monks' House Pool and Widdrington Moor Lake.



**Green-winged Teal** *Anas carolinensis*

A drake was at Backworth Pond between 7th-11th (GPK *et al.*) and possibly the same drake was at Swallow Pond on 14th (GPK *et al.*).



The Backworth Pond Green-winged Teal  
by Chris Barlow

**Mallard** *Anas platyrhynchos*

Peak counts were 324 at Big Waters on 17th (GB), 196 at the Tweed Estuary on 13th (MHu), 105-111 at Haughton Strother GP (MR) and Marden Quarry (KWY), 50-96 at Alnmouth, Castle Island, Grindon Lough, Lynemouth Flash, Middle Ord Pond, the Tweed Estuary, Whittle Dene Reservoirs and Widdrington Moor Lake, and 20-42 at Amble, Arcot, Bothal and Holywell Ponds, Bolam Lake, Dunstanburgh, Greenlee Lough, Hawkhill, Newcastle Leazes Park, Wallington Hall and Wark.

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**Pintail** *Anas acuta*

Two flew S at Tynemouth on 25th (SPP). Moderate numbers involved 14 at Fenham Flats on 1st (NNBC), up to three drakes and two ducks regularly at Druridge Pools all month (TB/TF/JFa *et al.*), up to four (three drakes) at Big Waters between 1st-17th (GB/AJJ), three (two drakes) at East Chevington on 17th (TRD/JD), one to three at Cresswell Pond between 24th-30th (MSH/PRM), and singles at Bolam Lake (drake displayed to female Mallards; CDB), Derwent Reservoir (unusual winter record at this site; IFo), Grindstonelaw (near Matfen), Swallow Pond and the Tweed Estuary.

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• A Drake Pintail at Bolam Lake  
• by Chris Barlow

**Shoveler** *Anas clypeata*

Swallow Pond amassed peaks of 55 on 17th, 43 on 21st and 27-36 on several further dates (GPK/SPP *et al.*), 22 were at Druridge Pools on 11th (MSH), 15 at Holy Island Lough on 17th (a good winter count here; IK), 12 at Ladyburn Lake on 17th (TRD/JD), ten at Bothal Pond on 3rd (TD), and four to five at Big Waters and Cresswell Pond. One to two were also at Budle Bay and Grindon Lough.

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**Pochard** *Aythya ferina*

Highest numbers were 23 (15 drakes) at Widdrington Moor Lake on 23rd (NFO), 14 (ten drakes) at Druridge Pools on 2nd (TD), 12 at Killingworth Lake on 21st (LJM), 11 (six drakes) at Swallow Pond on 29th (GPK), five to seven at Big Waters and Bothal Pond, and three at Branton GP. One to two were also at Arcot Pond, Marden Quarry, QEII CP Lake, West Stobswood and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. More unusual was a female at Tyne Green, Hexham on 16th (only the observer's second record here in 45 years!)(AJR).

**Tufted Duck** *Aythya fuligula*

A notable 150 were at Grindon Lough on 19th (MRS), 75 were at Killingworth Lake on 21st (LJM), 46 at QEII CP Lake on 7th (PRM), 31-39 at Big Waters (AJJ per GB), Bothal Pond (TF/JFa), Druridge Pools (DM/STH), Haughton Strother GP (MR), Newcastle Leazes Park (DM) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs (SR), and 16 at Ladyburn Lake and Swallow Pond. Five to nine were also at Arcot, Backworth, Coanwood and Holywell Ponds, Castle Island and Howdon.

**Scaup** *Aythya marila*

Six at East Chevington north pool between 16th-19th consisted of two first-winter drakes, a first-winter female and three adult females (TF/JFa *et al.*) while two to three birds were noted there on several further dates between 9th-31st. Two were at Druridge Pools on 10th (TRD) and one regularly between 1st-11th, and one was at Widdrington Moor Lake on 9th-10th (GB/TRD). Well inland, a female was at Grindon Lough on 13th (SJH) and a drake at Haughton Strother GP on 31st (MR).

**Eider** *Somateria mollissima*

Only small numbers reported, with peaks of 22-28 at Berwick North Shore, Meadow Haven (Berwick), Newbiggin and the Tweed Estuary, and ten to 16 at Budle Bay, Embleton Bay, Hadston, Low Newton, Seaton Sluice and Stag Rocks. Four to nine were also at Snab Point and Whitley Bay, and one at Holy Island.

**Long-tailed Duck** *Clangula hyemalis*

The traditionally favoured Stag Rocks held 35 on 17th (CGK/GPK) and three to 22 on various other dates between 9th-31st. A total of 30 drakes (but no ducks) were off Goswick Sands on 19th (MH/AA), 30+ were noted on a boat trip off Seahouses-Bamburgh-Ross on 17th (JL), and three were at Holy Island harbour on 1st (TD).

**Common Scoter** *Melanitta nigra*

At Stag Rocks, 80 were present on 28th (TRD/JD), 60 on 1st (NNBC), and five to 40 on various dates between 10th-31st. Few were recorded elsewhere, with five to nine at Holy Island, Newbiggin and Whitley Bay, and one to four off Druridge, Low Newton, Meadow Haven (Berwick), Seaton Sluice and Warkworth. A drake visited East Chevington north pool on 9th-10th (TF/JFa/NFO) and 28th (IFo/ADM), while a female was at Ladyburn Lake on 31st (NFO).

**Black Scoter** *Melanitta americana*

A drake was at Stag Rocks on 28th (TRD) and 31st (IBDa/KDa).

**Velvet Scoter** *Melanitta fusca*

A total of five flew N at Seaton Sluice on 6th-7th (SSWT), and on 7th, three S at St Mary's (MSH) and one S at Snab Point (PRM). Singles were at Stag Rocks on 28th (JD) and off Chevington burn mouth on 31st (TF/JFa). A highly unusual freshwater record concerned a drake at Swallow Pond on 6th (GPK).

The Velvet Scoter which paid  
a quick (and rare ) visit to  
Swallow Pond on 6th January  
by Graham Knox

**Goldeneye** *Bucephala clangula*

Two flew N at Tynemouth on 16th (DRW). Peak counts were 174 at Tweedmouth on 23rd (MHu), 82 at East Chevington north pool on 23rd (NFO), 50 at Widdrington Moor Lake on 1st (DM/STH), 41-46 at Berwick North Shore (MHu), Castle Island (DM/STH) and Grindon Lough (SJH), and 23-28 at Castle Island and Killingworth Lake. Counts of ten to 19 came from the Blyth Estuary, Bolam Lake, Bothal Pond and Caistron, and six to eight at Branton GP, Druridge Pools, Horncliffe, Marshall Meadows, QEII CP and Widdrington Moor Lakes, and West Ord. Three to four were also at Holywell and Swallow Ponds, and Horncliffe, and one to two at 15 further widespread sites.





A drake Goldeneye at Killingworth Lake on 30th January by Alan Jack

**Smew** *Mergellus albellus*

Single 'redheads' (perhaps the same mobile individual) were at Killingworth Lake on 1st (IJ) and four dates between 16th-30th (CDB/GPK *et al.*), Big Waters between 10th-12th and 14th (GB *et al.*), and Gosforth Park NR on 15th (DLo). A 'redhead' was also at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 11th-12th (EC/JSB/SR).



- The popular 'redhead' Smew at Killingworth Lake
- 30th January by Alan Jack

**Red-breasted Merganser** *Mergus serrator*

The Blyth Estuary attracted 15 on 17th (LJM), eight were at the Tweed Estuary on 5th (MHu), six to seven at Budle Bay (PRM), Druridge Pools (TF/JFa), Ladyburn Lake (TF/JFa) and Spittal Bay (MHu), and three to four at Cresswell Pond, East Chevington, Fenham Flats, Lesbury and Widdrington Moor Lake. One to two were also at Berwick North Shore, Boulmer, Castle Island, Holy Island, Horncliffe, Ladyburn Lake, Low Newton, Stag Rocks, the Tweed and Wansbeck Estuaries, and Whitley Bay.



**Goosander** *Mergus merganser*

Double-figure counts involved 22 at the Tweed Estuary on 13th (MHu) and 14 at Killingworth Lake on 27th (NFO). Three to four were found at Bolam Lake, Branton GP, Grindon Lough, Newcastle Leazes Park and Wark, and one to two at Backworth, Holywell and Swallow Ponds, Boulmer, Byker, Greenlee Lough, Hedgeley GP, Jesmond Dene, Ladyburn Lake, Lesbury, Marden Quarry, Morpeth, Ponteland Park, Wallington Hall and Warkworth Gut. A freshly dead female at Linhope Spout (Ingram) was thought probably shot (IRD).



A handsome drake Goosander  
Ladyburn Lake by Chris Barlow

**Red-legged Partridge** *Alectoris rufa*

Eight were at Hedgeley on 1st (TDR/JD) and Kimmer Lough on 31st (CGK/GPK), a peak of seven at Hartley West Farm (Holywell Dene) on 3rd (RJP) and five seen at Broadstruther (The Cheviots) and Elford (Bamburgh).

**Red Grouse** *Lagopus lagopus*

An intrepid observer was rewarded with a very high count of ca.180 at Simonside in thick snow on 15th (AJH). Elsewhere, 20 were at Broadstruther (The Cheviots) on 31st (TRD/JD), a minimum of ten at Whitefield Hill (nr. Harwood Forest) on 23rd (JL) and two at Allendale and Belford Moor.

**Black Grouse** *Tetrao tetrix*

In the Allendale area five males were present at both Meadow Cottage and Swinhope Shield on 21st (STH) with four birds (two male and two female) also at High Knock Shield Farm on that date (TRD/JD).

A Grey Hen at Allendale  
Tim Dean  
20th January

**Grey Partridge** *Perdix perdix*

The highest count this month was 16 at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 1st (TB), followed by 14 at Haughton Strother GP on 8th (MR) and 13 at Laverock Hall Farm (Blyth) on 10th (STH). Ten were present throughout January at Backworth (CGK/GPK/PRM) and one to eight were at Corbridge, Darras Hall, Druridge Pools, Hadston, High Horton (Blyth), Holy Island, Prestwick Carr, West Ord (Berwick) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.







A pair of Black Grouse at Allendale  
Tim Dean on 10th January

**Pheasant** *Phasianus colchicus*

One to two were at Holywell Dene throughout the month (RJP).

**Red-throated Diver** *Gavia stellata*

The peak for the month at Seaton Sluice was five N and 17 S in two hours on 4th, with few records on other dates (SSWT). 17 were all fairly close together off Snab Point (Cresswell) on 8th (EC/JSB) and 12 were at Goswick Sands on 19th (MH/AA). A minimum of ten were encountered during a "Serenity" boat trip off Seahouses/Bamburgh/Ross on 17th (JL) and many records of one to four birds were reported from throughout the whole of the coastal stretch.

**Black-throated Diver** *Gavia arctica*

Singles were reported from Berwick, Holy Island, Newbiggin, Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) and Snab Point (Cresswell).

**Great Northern Diver** *Gavia immer*

Passage birds included two S close inshore past Druridge Pools on 10th (TF/JFa), two S past Birling Links (Warkworth) on 15th (PRM) and singles N past Seaton Sluice Watch Tower on 2nd, and Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 5th. The popular Widdrington Moor Lake bird was present until at least 9th (GB/DM/STH/LAR) and another inland record was of one circling Holywell Pond on 10th before flying off south (SPP). Singles were seen at Holy Island Harbour and Ross Back Sands throughout the month and during the "Serenity" boat trip off Seahouses on 17th.

**Fulmar** *Fulmarus glacialis*

At Seaton Sluice passage commenced in earnest at the start of the month with peak counts of 120 S in one hour on 2nd and 75 S in three hours on 6th (SSWT). 119 were at Marshall Meadows (Berwick) on 20th (BWG). The start of the breeding season was evidenced by a count of 97 between Howick-Dunstanburgh on 16th which included 63 on ledges (MJC), 42 on Holy Island, mostly in pairs on the cliff, on 1st (TD), 12 pairs present at Marshall Meadows (Berwick) on 20th (MHu) and eight flying onto cliffs at Inner Farne on 9th (DM/GB/LAR). A minimum of 30 were seen from the "Serenity" boat trip around the Farne Islands on 17th (JL) and 13 were present at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) on 17th (IJ). One to ten were at various other coastal localities.

**Gannet** *Morus bassanus*

The total past Seaton Sluice was five N and 23 S between 2nd-7th (SSWT). The only other record was two immature birds flying S past Meadow Haven (Berwick) in a strong SE gale on 5th (MHu).

**Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo*

The largest count was 86 at North Shields Fish Quay on 9th (CB), followed by a peak of 42 in Blyth Harbour on 22nd (STH). Other double-digit counts were 15 during a WeBS count at Berwick North Shore on 15th (MHu), 12 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 18th (SR) and ten on an offshore rock at the Tweed Estuary on 23rd (JMA). One to nine were at many other localities. Singles of the continental *sinensis* race were at Holywell Pond on 9th (CGK/GPK) and on the River North Tyne at Wark on 17th (PRM).

**Shag** *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

Seaton Sluice Watch Tower recorded ten flying S between 2nd-6th (SSWT). The Meadow Haven (Berwick) roost held 19 during a WeBS count on 24th (MHu), ten were at Stag Rocks on 13th (CDB) and four were on wooden piles at North Shields Fish Quay on 9th (CB). One to four were at various other coastal localities including a ringed corpse found on Holy Island subsequently confirmed by the BTO to have been ringed as a nestling at Craighleith (Firth of Forth) on 10/06/2015 (DLo).

**Bittern** *Botaurus stellaris*

At Gosforth Park a single was seen on three dates during the month (GPK) and at East Chevington one was seen flying from the North Pool into a reedbed on the South Pool on 8th (PRM).

**Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta*

Up to seven were at Castle Island/River Wansbeck Estuary area throughout (GB/DM/STH/GMi), with five being the peak at Lindisfarne NNR (JDL/PRM). Up to four were present at Shankhouse Bridge (Cramlington) on various dates and single birds were at several other scattered localities.

**Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea*

The peak at Druridge Pools was 17 on 10th (TB), whilst 11 were present during a WeBS count in the River Tweed Estuary on 13th (MHu). Whittle Dene Reservoirs held six on 3rd (SR) and one to four birds were at many other typical localities.

**Little Grebe** *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Castle Island (River Wansbeck) proved a very popular location with 26 there during a WeBS count on 17th (DM/STH) and Caistron Lakes peaked with at least 13 present on 23rd (JL). Four was the maximum at East Chevington on 25th (TRD/JD) and one to three birds were at many other usual localities.

**Great Crested Grebe** *Podiceps cristatus*

Only two records received - one at Derwent Reservoir from the 18th onwards (IFo) and a single offshore at Brierdene (Whitley Bay) on 4th December (SPP)

**Red-Necked Grebe** *Podiceps grisegena*

A well-watched individual at Monks' House Pool (Bamburgh) was present from 9th – 15th, giving some fantastic close views (GB/TB/CDB *et al.*) and a single was at Berwick on 10th (MHu).

Right the Red-necked Grebe at Monks' House Pool by Tim Dean on 13th January and below

A Slavonian Grebe at East Chevington on 1st January by Jonathan Farooqi

**Slavonian Grebe** *Podiceps auritus*

Four were in Holy Island Harbour on 1st (TD) and two at both Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 31st and Ross on 17th (CGK/GPK). Singles were at East Chevington, Holywell Pond, Royal Quays Marina (North Shields), and Snab Point (Cresswell).

**Black-necked Grebe** *Podiceps nigrocollis*

Singles were present at East Chevington North Pool from 24th – 31st (ADM/TF/JFa/NFO *et al.*) and Ladyburn Lake (Druridge Bay CP) on 7th (PRM).

**Red Kite** *Milvus milvus*

No records this month.

**Marsh Harrier** *Circus aeruginosus*

Several records of the over-wintering female came from East Chevington on 1st, 10th, 13th, 17th and 23rd (TR/JF/TRD *et al.*).

**Hen Harrier** *Circus cyaneus*

On the 1st two birds, a male and a ringtail male, were noted at a confidential site. An adult male was observed hunting steadily N at Low Newton on 12th (MH/AA) and a ringtail was noted at two other sites on 16th and 19th (NNBC).

**Goshawk** *Accipiter gentilis*

Single birds were at a confidential site on 1st (SR/AH) and 6th (JD) and a male was displaying at Harwood Forest on 23rd (JL).





**Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter nisus*

Two birds were at Howdon on 8th (CB), and at Derwent Reservoir on 17th (IFo). A female was noted at Ellington on several dates (TB), and sightings of other single birds came from 18 sites.

**Common Buzzard** *Buteo buteo*

Four birds were observed at Hartside Village (Ingram) on 31st (IRD) and three were at Grindon Lough on 7th (SJH) while two birds were at Plenmeller Common & at Coanwood Lough on 12th (SJH) and at Low Newton on 15th (PRM). Singles were recorded at Arcot Hall, Belford Moor, Bothal Pond, Chipchase, Cramlington, Hemscott Hill, Holy Island, Holywell Pond, Hulne Park (Alnwick), Longhirst, Newham Bog, Ross Back Sands, Warren Burn (Lucker), Wark (N Tyne) and at Woodhorn Flash.

**Water Rail** *Rallus aquaticus*

Cresswell Pond had three birds on 17th & 24th (ADMc) and one to two on several dates (ADMc *et al.*). Two birds were also East Chevington on 8th (PRM), Woodhorn S Flash on 13th (ADMc), Whiteadder Point (Berwick) on 20th and 25th (BWG) and Big Waters on 31st (GB). Single birds were also heard or seen at Big Waters, Cresswell Pond, East Chevington, Holywell Pond and St Mary's Wetland.

A Water Rail

Gosforth NR

Alan Younger

24th January

**Moorhen** *Gallinula chloropus*

24 birds at Druridge Bay CP on 28th (IFo), 23 at Castle Island on 17th (DM/STH) and 20 at Backworth Pond on 8th (PRM) were the highest counts, followed by 18 at Woodhorn S Flash on 9th and 18 at Druridge Bay CP on 21st (JMA). 16 were at Low Newton Scrape on 15th (STH) and 15 at Wallington Hall on 1st (PRM) along with 14 birds at QEII CP on 7th (PRM). One – ten birds were also at Bolam Lake, Chirton Dene Park (N Shields), Coanwood Lough, Cresswell Pond, Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Grindon Lough, Holywell Pond, Jesmond Dene (Newcastle), Leazes Park (Newcastle), Low Newton, Monks' House Pool, and Tweed Dock (Tweedmouth).

**Coot** *Fulica atra*

At QEII CP 108 birds were present on 7th (PRM). 53 birds were at Bothal Pond on 17th (TD) and 41 were at Big Waters NWT on 1st (GB). One to eight birds were at Arcot Pond, Bolam Lake, Castle Island, Druridge Pools, Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Grindon Lough, Holywell Pond, Leazes Park (Newcastle), Monks' House Pool, Tweed Dock (Tweedmouth), Tynemouth, Whittle Dene Reservoirs and Widdrington Moor Lake.

**Oystercatcher** *Haematopus ostralegus*

Brotherton's Hole (Berwick) held the most with 225 on 20th (BWG), whilst in the south 106 were counted feeding on golf pitch & putt at Brierdene (Whitley Bay) on 7th (MSH). The WeBS count at Berwick north shore totalled 86 on 15th (MHu) and the BTO NEWS count between Howick-Dunstanburgh recorded 78 on 16th (MJC). Counts of 20-52 were logged at Berwick (below Ness Gate), Boulmer, Embleton Bay, Hemscott Hill (Cresswell), Holy Island causeway and the R. Tweed Estuary, whilst ten to 16 were noted Birling Links/Carrs, Budle Bay, Hadston (Druridge Bay), Stag Rocks, West Ord and Whitley Bay. Birds were also seen inland at Haughton Strother GP with a single on 25th and seven on 31st (MR).

**Golden Plover** *Pluvialis apricaria*

A count of 1,365 moving S at Seaton Sluice in one hour on 3rd was presumed to be a local movement (SSWT). Holy Island harbour held ca.1,500 'flighty' birds on 1st (TD) and nearby Budle Bay held 1,100+ on 17th (CGK/GPK). A count of 1,000 also came from Seahouses on 1st (NNBC) and 800+ were recorded in a flooded field near Brier Dene Farm on 25th (MSH). Elsewhere, 400-500 were noted at Fenham Mill, Grindon Lough, Low Newton scrape and West Stobswood, whilst in the south east 120-250 were present at Backworth, Druridge Pools, Hemscott Hill (Cresswell), Prestwick Carr and St Mary's Island. A further flock of 140 was seen at Billylaw (Ord Moor, Berwick). Smaller groups of 27-52 were at Cocklawburn, Cresswell Pond, Derwent Reservoir, Monks' House fields and Tynemouth, whilst single-figure reports came from a further four locations.

**Grey Plover** *Pluvialis squatarola*

A total of 40+ at Fenham Mill on 1st (MSH) was the only double-digit report received. The R. Blyth Estuary held eight on 17th (LJM), seven were on Berwick north shore on 15th (MHu), four at Beal Point on 23rd (TRD/JD), three at Hadston Carrs on 1st (TF/JFa) and one to two at Cocklawburn, Embleton Bay, Hemscott Hill (Cresswell), Holy Island causeway, Low Newton and the R. Tweed Estuary.



A Grey Plover at Holy Island causeway by Chris Barlow

**Lapwing** *Vanellus vanellus*

Two large flocks included 3,000 at Ross Farm and 2,000 at Seahouses, both on 1st (NNBC). Inland groups included 780 at Haughton Strother GP on 31st (MR), 500 at Derwent Reservoir on 22nd (JMA) and 500 at Prestwick Carr on 9th (PCF). Some 500+ were also on the R. Coquet floodplain on 23rd (JL). Counts of 300-355 also came from near Brier Dene Farm, Grindon Lough, Hemscott Hill (Cresswell) and Monks' House Pool; flocks of 120-240 were also logged at Alnmouth, Big Waters, Bothal Pond, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, Elsdon, New Water Haugh (R. Tweed), Old Hartley and Scotswood (R. Tyne). A total of 70 moved S at Seaton Sluice between 2nd-4th and 17-50 were at Backworth Pond, Birling Links/Carrs, Chipchase, Cocklawburn and Ulgham.

**Ringed Plover** *Charadrius hiaticula*

A count of 57 was made at Monks' House fields on 13th (TRD/JD) and the factory roof roost in Blyth harbour held 47 on 22nd (STH). Further counts included 34 at Berwick north shore on 15th (MHu), 24 on the R. Tweed Estuary on 23rd (JMA), 20 in the village bay Newbiggin on 4th (STH), 15 at both Embleton Bay and Fenham-le-Moor, 12 at both Cocklawburn and the R. Tweed, and single-figure reports from a further four sites.



A Ringer Plover at Saint Mary's Island by Chris Barlow



**Curlew** *Numerius arquata*

Some very large counts were reported this month, the highest being 550+ at Budle Bay on 21st (PRM). A total of 212 was logged in the Boulmer area on 20th (AB/LB), 192 were at Ross Back Sands on 21st (PRM), 185 at Druridge Pools on 18th (STH/IFo), ca.180 in Druridge Bay on 17th (AJR) and 170+ at Hemscott Hill (Cresswell) on 7th (PRM). Some 80-91 were noted at the R. Coquet Estuary, Marden Farm field and St Mary's Island, 62 were on the R. Blyth Estuary, 50-60 at the R. Coquet floodplain and Cullercoats Bay with smaller numbers reported from a further 14 locations.

**Black-tailed Godwit** *Limosa limosa*

A flock in the Cresswell Pond/Hemscott Hill area peaked at 12 on 7th (PRM) with no more than four reported on several additional dates throughout the month. Nearby Druridge Pools also held one to two on four dates (DM *et al.*) and a single flew NE over East Chevington on 31st (TF/JFa). A single bird also put in an appearance in Budle Bay on 9th (TB).

**Bar-tailed Godwit** *Limosa lapponica*

Typically, the highest count involved 30 from the Holy Island causeway on 10th (CDB) and a count in Budle Bay involved 13 on 21st (PRM). The shore at Boulmer held 12 on 19th (JMA), nine were on the beach at Low Newton on 15th (PRM) and the R. Blyth Estuary held a peak of eight on 28th (LJM). The flooded area near Bell's Farm/Hemscott Hill also held four on 4th (DM/GB/LAR) and five on 10th (TF/JFa). Three to five were also seen at Berwick north shore and the R. Tweed Estuary, whilst one to two were present at Cresswell Pond, Hadston (Druridge Bay) and Stag Rocks.

**Turnstone** *Arenaria interpres*

The WeBS revealed 46 in R Tweed Estuary on 13th and 24 at Berwick North Shore on 15th (both MHu). Stag Rocks held 20 on 10th and the most in the Cresswell Pond area was also 20, at high tide on 25th; 16 were noted between Chevington Burn and Hadston on 13th. Nine or fewer were seen at Embleton Bay, Holy Island, Low Newton, Newbiggin, St Mary's, Seahouses and Whitley Bay.

**Knot** *Calidris canutus*

At Fenham-le-Moor around 1,000 were present on 15th (SMA), where 100 were noted on 9th and 50 were at Boulmer on 19th. Five or fewer were reported in Budle Bay, the Cresswell Pond area and Holy Island and also three on a flash pool at Prestwick Carr on 4th (A I Bowman/GB/PCF), a very unusual inland record.

**Ruff** *Calidris pugnax*

What was probably the same individual seen in December 2015 remained in Druridge Bay and was reported on six dates from 7th to 31st inclusive (PRM *et al.*), visiting Hemscott Hill, Bell's Farm pond, Cresswell Pond and Druridge Pools.

**Sanderling** *Calidris alba*

The top counts were of 115 in Alnmouth Bay on 20th (AB/LB), around 100 on Boulmer shore on 19th (JMA), 58 at Spittal on 6th, 55 at Seaton Bay on 11th and up to 42 in the Berwick area. Also 35 were in Druridge Bay on 13th, 19 in R Wansbeck estuary on 16th, 19 at St Mary's on 17th and 17 at Whitley Bay on 25th.

**Dunlin** *Calidris alpina*

Around 400 were on Boulmer shore on 19th (JMA) and 250 roosted on a factory roof at Blyth Harbour on 22nd (STH). The peak at Tynemouth was 80 on 16th (DRW), where the individual in full breeding plumage noted in December 2015 was again present, on 15th (SPP). Up to 42 were recorded in Budle Bay and the Cresswell area and small numbers in another nine places, including three at Prestwick Carr on 4th.

**Purple Sandpiper** *Calidris maritima*

A flock of about 150 at Seahouses Harbour on 13th (TRD/JD) was a high number for the location. Elsewhere 53 were counted at high water at Low Newton on 11th (AB/LB) and 40-50 were seen at Stag Rocks mid-month (CDB/TRD/JD/STH). The most at Tynemouth was 19 on 1st, 12 were at Holy Island on 24th with single figures at a further seven localities.

Purple Sandpipers in flight

Seahouses

by Alan Jack

23rd January

**Grey Phalarope** *Phalaropus fulicarius*

One was on the sea off Seahouses/Bamburgh/Ross on 17th (JL), seen from 'Serenity' boat trip.



**Green Sandpiper** *Tringa ochropus*

The peak at Whittle Dene Reservoirs was four on 18th (SR) and one was at Branton GP on 25th (IBDa/KDa).

**Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia*

One was reported in Budle Bay on 1st (NNBC).

**Redshank** *Tringa totanus*

The WeBS at R. Tweed Estuary revealed 114 on 13th (MHu) and at least 110 were noted in Budle Bay on 21st (PRM). Other higher counts were of around 80 in roadside floods at Hemscott Hill on 7th, at least 60 at Low Newton on 15th and 48 at Berwick on 15th. Forty or less were reported from another 11 typical coastal habitats and also three visited Bothal Pond on 3rd.



A Redshank at St. Mary's by Chris Barlow

**Jack Snipe** *Limnocyrtus minimus*

One was present at Backworth throughout (CGK/GPK *et al.*). Other singles were found at West Hartford on 3rd (STH), Ellington on 4th (TB), Swallow Pond on 11th (SPP), Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 18th (SR) and at St Mary's Wetland on 23rd (AC).

**Long-billed Dowitcher** *Limnodromus scolopaceus*

The long-staying first-winter remained all month, mostly at Cresswell Pond but also noted in roadside floods at Hemscott Hill and at Bell's Farm pond (ADMc/IRD/IJ/DM/STH *et al.*).

**Woodcock** *Scolopax rusticola*

One came in off the sea at Tynemouth on 10th (DRW) and one flew low W at Birling on 17th (NFO). Two were at Howdon on 8th (CB) with one there on 10th. Other singles showed at Arcot Pond, Backworth Pond, Big Waters, Branton GP, Boulmer, Harthope Valley, Harwood Forest, Holy Island, Ryal and Whitley Bay. No doubt most of the records reflect immigrants escaping severely cold conditions on the continent.

**Snipe** *Gallinago gallinago*

The largest concentrations were of 40 at Holy Island on 21st (SR), 32 at Haughton Strother GP on 25th (MR) and 24 at Branton GP on 23rd/24th (DGB *et al.*/NNBC). Ten to 13 were found at Caistron, Cresswell Pond, Hedgeley GP, Holy Island and Swallow Pond and small numbers at a further 12 places.

**Pomarine Skua** *Stercorarius pomarinus*

One in R Tweed Estuary was chasing Herring Gulls on 5th (MHu).

**Great Skua** *Stercorarius skua*

A noteworthy five records were received, those early in the month quite probably involving the same individual: S at Holy Island on 1st (IK), S at Tynemouth on 2nd (DRW), N at Seaton Sluice on 2nd (SSWT) and resting with Eiders in R Tweed Estuary on 3rd (MHu), the latter date described as a 'stormy day'. One flew S at Stag Rocks on 21st (PRM).

**Puffin** *Fratercula arctica*

The only record was of one seen from a 'Serenity' boat trip out of Seahouses on 17th (JL).

**Razorbill** *Alca torda*

At least ten were noted on the sea from the boat trip from Seahouses on 17th (JL), five were at Bamburgh Stag Rocks on 31st (STH) with one to two at Bamburgh, Cocklawburn, Low Newton and Whitley Bay on other dates throughout the month (TRD/MSH/STH/IJ/PRM).

**Little Auk** *Alle alle*

A strong SE wind with squalls on 5th brought good numbers into the North Sea and, over a three-hour period, 300 were counted moving S at Bamburgh Stag Rocks (AA/MH) with 15 recorded at Beadnell during the same movement (GRo). On the following day 25 moved S in three hours at Seaton Sluice (SSWT) and single-figure counts of one to six came from Blyth, Cresswell, St Mary's and Tynemouth on a number of days from 2nd-15th.

**Guillemot** *Uria aalge*

At Seaton Sluice 85 moved S in five hours on 2nd, although few were recorded there beyond that date (SSWT) and, on the same day, 13 passed N in an hour at North Blyth (STH). At Tynemouth, 40 were on the sea by the pier on 24th (DRW) and 12 were at Berwick on 10th (Mhu). Elsewhere, one to eight were noted at 12 localities between Bamburgh and Tynemouth on many dates throughout the month.

**Kittiwake** *Rissa tridactyla*

The SE blow on 5th brought an influx into the North Sea with 251 (20% immatures) recorded moving S in three hours at Bamburgh Stag Rocks (AA/MH) and on the following day the movement S continued with 150 passing at Seaton Sluice (SSWT). Ten were at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) on 2nd but thereafter, apart from the notable movement on 5th-6th, only one to three were present at ten coastal localities from St Mary's Island to Goswick Sands.

**Black-headed Gull** *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

Well-recorded this month with flocks of ca.700 from a NEWS count on 13th from Chevington Burn-Hadston (TD), 560 and 456 in the Tweed Estuary on 27th and 13th respectively (Mhu), 400 at Castle Island and Boulmer on 17th (DM/JMA), 350 at Prestwick Carr (PCF) and 320 at Backworth (CGK) on 9th. Lesser flocks of ca.100-220 were at Acklington, Big Waters, Bothal Pond, Gloucester Lodge Farm, Jesmond Dene, Marden Quarry (JMA/MJCo/GB/KWY/TD) and 50-100 at Berwick, Bolam Lake, Druridge Bay CP, Leazes Park, St Mary's and Whitley Bay (DM/IJ/MHu/CDB). Up to 40 were at five other localities.

**Little Gull** *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

The SE winds which prevailed during the first few days brought in very significant numbers for the first month of the year. At Seaton Sluice the influx occurred from 2nd-7th when 34 moved S and two N, all of which were adults except for four 1st-winters (SSWT); on the peak day, 5th, nine also moved S at Bamburgh Stag Rocks (AA/MH) and six were noted at Beadnell (Gro); six were seen at Brierdene on 7th (AC). Elsewhere, 22 records of one to four, mainly adult birds, came from around 20 coastal sites from the River Tweed Estuary-St Mary's Island, on many dates from 2nd-10th, with a most unusual inland sighting from Prestwick Carr where an adult fed on worms around the flash pools on 3rd (PCF/GB).

**Mediterranean Gull** *Larus melanocephalus*

Numbers remained low but widespread in the SE with records of two adults coming from four localities, Backworth-Shiremoor (CGK/GPK *et al.*), Big Waters (GB), Newbiggin (TB) and Brierdene (AC). Single birds, the majority adults, were sighted elsewhere at Bell's Farm pond, Bothal Pond, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Bay CP and Pools, Lynemouth Flash, St Mary's island, Swallow Pond, Tynemouth and Woodhorn South Flash.

**Common Gull** *Larus canus*

Budle Bay hosted 4,000 on 1st (NFO) but records from elsewhere were far lower with 335 at Haughton Strother GP on 13th (MR) and 176 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 11th (SR). Small flocks of 20-60 were at Berwick North Shore, Bolam Lake, Bothal Pond, Grindon Lough, Hadston and the River Tweed Estuary (SJH/TD/MHu/CDB) with up to 20 at five other localities.

**Lesser Black-backed Gull** *Larus fuscus graelsii*

Two records of single un-aged birds came from Jesmond Dene (MJCo) and Seaton Delaval (TB) with single adults recorded at Arcot Lane (DM) and on the River Tyne at Elswick Wharf (DM).

**Herring Gull** *Larus argentatus argentatus*

Maximum counts of 300+, 264 and 200 were recorded, respectively, on the River Tyne at Scotswood on 9th (JL), in the River Tweed Estuary on 13th (Mhu) and at Derwent Reservoir on 22nd (JMA). Smaller gatherings of 20-100 were at Berwick North Shore, Castle Island, Hadston, Leazes Park, Whitley Bay (Rockcliffe), Widdrington Moor Lake and Wooler (JMA/TD/MHu/IJ/DM) with up to ten at five other localities.

At least five Northern race birds, *L. a. argentatus*, were recorded with the flock of *argenteus* at Scotswood on 9th (JL), with four at the QE II CP on 7th (PRM) and two in Amble Harbour on 16th (MSH).

**\*Caspian Gull** *Larus cachinnans*

A probable adult bird was seen briefly at Haughton Strother GP on 13th (MR).

**Iceland Gull** *Larus glaucooides*

A 2nd-winter bird frequented the QE II CP from 1st-8th (DM/STH/TF/JFa/GB/TB/PRM) and 1st-winter birds, possibly involving just a single individual, were at Druridge Bay CP and at Tynemouth on 10th (TF/JFa/JL).



An Iceland Gull at QEII Park on 4th January by Jonathan Farooqi

**Great Black-backed Gull** *Larus marinus*

The largest counts were 50+ at Scotswood on 9th (JL), 38 in the Tweed Estuary on 19th (Mhu) and 28 at Budle Bay on 9th (DM). Elsewhere, one to 15 were recorded at Berwick (North Shore), Big Waters, Castle Island, Cullernose Point, East Chevington, Grindon Lough, Hadston, Haughton Strother GP, River Tyne (Newcastle Business Park), Whitley Bay (Rockcliffe) and Widdrington Moor lake.

**Feral Pigeon/Rock Dove** *Columba livia*

Counts of 91 on 10th and 90 on 12th at Blyth Harbour (LJM/STH), 22 at Waren Mill in 4th (DM/GB/LAR), 20 at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) on 8th (IJ), 13 at Southfield Green (Cramlington) on 2nd (DM) and present at Jesmond Dene during the month.

**Stock Dove** *Columba oenas*

Gatherings at Howdon numbered 72 on 4th and 68 on 8th (CB), 15 at Big Waters NWT on 10th (GB), 12 at High Knock Shield Farm (Allendale) on 21st (TRD/JD), eight at Cresswell Pond on 17th, seven at Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay) on 24th and one to six at eight other widespread localities.

**Woodpigeon** *Columba palumbus*

Large flocks of 1,600+ inland of Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 10th (CDB), 1,000 at Bamburgh on 9th and at North Charlton on 17th (DM/GB/LAR/IK), 750 at Belsay on 3rd (CB), 580 at Haughton Strother GP (Humshaugh) on 8th (MR) and 500+ at Spindleston on 20th (BRS). 250 were at Cocklawburn on 23rd, 150 at Adderstone on the same date with 100 at Little Moor Newcastle on 17th (JMA) and four to 90 at 12 other locations.

**Collared Dove** *Streptopelia decaocto*

On 8th 16 were at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) (IJ), 14 at Fenham-le-Moor on 9th (DM/GB/LAR), six at Alnwick Garden on 9th and at Kenton (Newcastle) on 21st (JMA/MRS), four at Dinnington on 17th and three at Eachwick on 1st.

**Barn Owl** *Tyto alba*

Four were found at Holy Island on 10th with three there on 24th (SR/AH) and the resident pair at the regular nest site on 15th (IK). Two were at Fowberry and Chatton on 19th (*per* NNBC), East Chevington on 31st and Lilburn on same date (DGB/RHB) with singles at an encouraging 25 other locations.

**Little Owl** *Athene noctua*

Two at the regular Shiremoor site during the month, one at Prestwick Carr on 8th (PCF), Derwent Reservoir on 10th & 29th (IFo) and East Holywell (Whitley Bay) on 17th (MNC).



**Tawny Owl** *Strix aluco*

Two remained at a garden nestbox in Stamfordham through month (EC) with singles heard at Backworth Village and Rothbury all month (CGK/TRD). One was at Big Waters on 1st, Holywell Dene on 8th, Dancing Green Hill (Belford Moor) on 9th, Hareshaw Common and Bellingham on 21st.

**Long-eared Owl** *Asio otus*

Two or more birds used a North Tyneside roost throughout the month (CGK/PGK) with a single on the western edge of Rothbury on 21st (PRM) the only other report.

**Short-eared Owl** *Asio flammeus*

The peak count at Prestwick Carr was four on 3rd (PCF/GB) with two to three regularly during the month. Two were at Backworth over five days from 7th (CGK/GPK *et al.*), Berwick Walls on 15th (BWG), Holy Island on 17th (IK) and Druridge on 19th (MSH) with singles regularly at 10 other locations.

**Kingfisher** *Alcedo atthis*

Two at Branton GP during the month and at Jesmond Dene on 24th (IBDa/KDa/MJCo) with regular sightings at Swallow Pond and Big Waters NWT (GPK *et al.*/GB). Singles were at 15 other widespread localities with one at Bolam Lake the observers first since 1994 (CDB).

**Green Woodpecker** *Picus viridis*

The regular bird flew into the observer's garden at Rothbury on 14th (TRD/JD) and one was at Letah Wood (Hexham) on 19th (AJH).

**Great Spotted Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos major*

On 31st three were at Jesmond Dene and at Prestwick Carr (MJCo/PCF) with two in an Old Hartley garden on 22 days of the month often twice or thrice (RJP). Two were in a Tynemouth garden on 3rd (CB), at Rockliffe (Whitley Bay) on 8th (IJ), at Spindleston on 20th (BRS) and Holywell Dene on 31st (AJN) with singles at 16 other locations.

A Great Spotted Woodpecker

Holywell

19th January

Alan Jack

**Kestrel** *Falco tinnunculus*

Three were at Prestwick Carr on 3rd (GB). Two birds were at Old Hartley throughout the month (MNC) and two were also at Bothal Pond on 19th & at Pegswood on 27th (TB). Singles were also recorded at over 30 sites.

**Merlin** *Falco columbarius*

Single birds were seen at Bamburgh, Beadnell, Elwick, Birling Carrs (Warkworth), Druridge Pools, Fenham Flats, Fenham-le-Moor, Holy Island, Prestwick Carr and Tynemouth.

**Peregrine** *Falco peregrinus*

All sightings involved single birds including a female back at a nest site on 21st (EC) and other single birds were at Backworth Pond, Beadnell, Big Waters, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, Goswick Sands, Harthope Valley, Hartley Cliffs, Hemscott Hill (Cresswell), Holy Island, Hornccliffe, Monks' House Pool, Newmoor (Ashington), North Sunderland, Redheugh Bridge (Newcastle), Seaton Sluice, Wallington Hall.

**Magpie** *Pica pica*

At Scotswood (R.Tyne) more than 40 were present on 9th (JL), 24 at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 30th (DM), 10 at Big Waters NWT on 1st (GB), seven at Jesmond Dene on 17th (MJCo) and two to four at Cresswell Pond NWT and Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay).

**Jay** *Garrulus glandarius*

Two were regularly at Rising Sun CP (Wallsend) during the month (GPK), at Haughton Strother GP on 4th (MR) and Arcot Hall on the same date (STH) with singles at nine other widely spread localities.

**Jackdaw** *Corvus monedula*

A pre-roost gathering near Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 23rd numbered around 1,000 (EC), with 300 at QEII CP on 10th (CDB) and at Lynemouth Flash on 26th (MSH), 250 at Embleton Bay on 23rd (JMA) and 180 at Ramshaw Fell (Plenmeller Common) on 12th (STH). 150 were at Warkworth on 17th, 100 at Kiln Pit Hill on 22nd, 60 at Stannington on 23rd and 50 at Alndyke on 17th (JMA) with three to eight at Eachwick and Jesmond Dene.



Jackdaws at Killingworth (with a secret?)  
by Chris Barlow

**Rook** *Corvus frugilegus*

A high count of 250 at Embleton Bay on 23rd, 150 at Widdrington on the same date, 100 at Chevington Moor on 21st, 75 at Wooden on 17th with 50 at Acklington, Amble, Newham and Ulgham and 25 at Widdrington Village (JMA).

**Carrion Crow** *Corvus corone*

Frozen flood water attracted 59 south of Gosforth Park NR on 21st several with white fault lines on wings (MH). A pre roost gathering of 52 at Prestwick Carr on 25th (PCF), 30 at Northumberland Park (North Shields) on the same date (MNC), 26 at Hemscott Hill (Cresswell) on 1st (DM/STH) and 20 at Beal Saltmarsh (Lindisfarne NNR) on 16th (IK). One to six were at Cresswell Pond, Jesmond Dene and Rockcliffe.

**Hooded Crow** *Corvus corone cornix*

One was photographed at the causeway Holy Island from 08.45-10.45h on 21st (PRM).

**Raven** *Corvus corax*

On 21st two were at Holy Island (SR), feeding on sheep carcass at Grindon Lough on 27th (SJH) and Breamish Valley on 30th (JD). Singles were at Eglington Moor on 1st, Ramshaw Fell (Plenmeller Common) on 12th and Grindon Lough on 21st.

**Goldcrest** *Regulus regulus*

Few seen with singles at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 16th & 31st (DM), Wark (N.Tyne) on 17th (PRM), Chapel House (Newcastle) on 18th (MH) and Jesmond Dene on 24th (MJCo).

**Blue Tit** *Cyanistes caeruleus*

Trapping for ringing found 24 at Spindlestone on 20th (BRS), 10 at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) on 24th the peak count for the month (IJ) with three at Jesmond Dene on 10th and Bolam Lake on 23rd. Singles were at Great North Museum (Newcastle) and Cresswell Pond.

A Blue Tit

Holywell

19th January

Alan Jack





**Great Tit** *Parus major*

Eight were trapped and ringed at Spindlestone on 20th (BRS), and the same number in Jesmond Dene on 31st (MJCo), six at Prestwick Carr on 30th and five at Dinnington on the same date (PCF). Four were at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) on 8th & 17th (IJ), two in gardens at Holy Island an unusual winter record (IK) and at Bolam Lake on 23rd (CDB).

**Coal Tit** *Periparus ater*

At Spindlestone nine were trapped and ringed on 20th (BRS), more than five at Wallington Hall on 1st (PRM) and four at Derwent Reservoir on 10th (IFo). Up to three were in an Old Hartley Garden and Holywell Dene during the month and at Jesmond Dene with two at Howdon and Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay).

**Willow Tit** *Poecile montanus*

Two regularly at Backworth and Holywell Dene during the month (CGK/GPK/RJP), visiting feeders at East Cramlington Pond NWT on 13th and 17th (STH/DM), Longhorsely on 15th (AB/LB) and Prestwick Carr on 30th (PCF). One to two fed regularly at Big Waters (GB) with singles also at Derwent Reservoir, Linden Hall (Longhorsely) on five dates and Rising Sun CP (Wallsend).

**Marsh Tit** *Poecile palustris*

Around Morpeth two were at the Abbey and Borough Woods on 12th and Scotch Gill Woods on 23rd (ADMc/STH) with two also at Spindlestone on 9th and Acomb on 31st (ADMc/AJH). Singles were regularly at Linden Hall (Longhorsely) (NFO), Craggside (Rothbury) (TRD/JD) and visiting feeders at Bickerton Village on 23rd (JL).

**Skylark** *Alauda arvensis*

Some good winter flocks with 22 at Ord Moor (Berwick) on 17th (MHu), 19 at Beacon Lane (Cramlington) on 25th (LJM), 18 at Quarry House Moor on 11th (MH) and one to four at six other locations including singing birds at Holywell on 27th and Kearsley on 28th.

**Long-tailed Tit** *Aegithalos caudatus*

Larger 'tribes' included 14 at Prestwick Carr on 14th (PCF), 13 at Backworth on 15th (GPK), Holywell Dene on 20th (RJP) and at West Hartford on 17th (STH) and 12 at Eachwick on 1st and at Tweedmouth on 20th. Elsewhere, ten to 11 were reported from Budle Bay, Lesbury, Rothbury and Tynemouth; eight were noted at Branton GP, Derwent Reservoir and Forth Banks (Newcastle) and two to six at a further ten localities.

**Chiffchaff** *Phylloscopus collybita*

One at Morpeth on 22nd (TF/JFa) and one at Howick (SS) were the only records .



A Chiffchaff at Howick  
Stewart Sexton



**Blackcap** *Sylvia atricapilla*

A female was at Gosforth Garden Village all month and a male was seen there on 15th (MJC). A female frequented a Tynemouth garden from 8th-14th (DRW), a male was in an Alnwick garden on 16th (JMA); another bird was at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) on 24th(IJ) and a male visited feeders at East Ord (Berwick) on 30th (BWG).

**Waxwing** *Bombus garrulous*

Very scarce this winter, with two noted at Druridge Pools on 31st (TF/JFa) and singles at the Blyth Estuary on 3rd (STH) and at Gosforth Central Park on 14th (CDB).

**Nuthatch** *Sitta europaea*

Well reported, with up to three in Jesmond Dene and two at Arcot Hall and Chugdon Wood (Ellington). Singles were reported from Bolam Lake, Gosforth Park NR, Holywell Dene, Humshaugh, Ponteland, Rothbury, Spindlestone, Wallington Hall and Wark (North Tyne).

**Treecreeper** *Certhia familiaris*

One to two were reported from Arcot Pond, Backworth Pond, Gosforth Park NR, Holywell Dene, Jesmond Dene, Lesbury, Morpeth, Prestwick Carr, Rothbury, Scotch Gill Woods (Morpeth), Spindlestone and Wallington Hall.

**Wren** *Troglodytes troglodytes*

One to two were reported from Bolam Lake, Cresswell Pond, Holywell Dene, Jesmond Dene and Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay).

**Starling** *Sturnus vulgaris*

A reedbed roost at Lambley Farm minewater treatment works numbered 3,500 on 9th, 2,500 on 20th and 3,500 on 27th-30th (SJH). A large flock of 2,000 was feeding on fields at Widdrington on 4th (GB) and a roost of 243 (digital camera count) was at Fawdon on 15th (CDB). Elsewhere there were counts of 100-200 from Derwent Reservoir, Grindon Lough, Ulgham, Wallsend and Whitley Bay; 30-40 were at Druridge Pools and 25 at Red Row.

**Dipper** *Cinclus cinclus*

Two were reported from Dissington Bridge, Holywell Dene and Jesmond Dene (Benton Bank Bridge), while singles were at Cramlington (Horton Burn), Hedgeley, Hulne Park, Jesmond Dene (Castle Farm Road Bridge), Ponteland and Thrum Mill.

**Blackbird** *Turdus merula*

An influx produced 23 at Haughton Strother (Humshaugh) on 31st (MR). Elsewhere, 12 were at Howdon on 4th and ten at Prestwick Carr on 1st and at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) on 17th. One to four were noted at a further four localities, including birds in full song at Chapel House on 9th and East Ord (Berwick) on 18th.

**Fieldfare** *Turdus pilaris*

The largest gathering was 200 at Grindon Hill on 23rd (EC), while 100-150 were reported from Billylaw (Berwick), Broadstrother (Cheviots), Druridge, Humshaugh, Park Village and Prestwick Carr. Counts of 60-90 were reported from Capheaton, Fenwick (Stamfordham), Heddon-on-the-Wall and West Ord (Berwick); 12-20 were noted at a further three localities.

**Song Thrush** *Turdus philomelos*

Birds in full song were well reported from Newcastle city centre, at Armstrong Park, Exhibition Park, Heaton Park and Leazes Park from the beginning of the month (DHWB). Two were noted at Castle Island and Haughton Strother GP (Humshaugh) and singles at Big Waters, Brunswick Village, Howdon, Warkworth Lane and West Stobswood.

A Song Thrush

Seahouses

Alan Jack

23rd January



**Redwing** *Turdus iliacus*

A large flock of 220 was at Eglington on 31st (CGK/GPK) and 100 were at Hexham on 18th (AJH); 50-60 were noted at Backworth, Cramlington and Gosforth Garden Village and 30-45 at Capheaton, Cramlington (Beacon Hill), Druridge Lane, Prestwick Carr, and West Ord (Berwick). There were counts of 20 from Hulne Park and Exhibition Park and up to 12 were reported from a further ten localities.

**Mistle Thrush** *Turdus viscivorus*

Counts of 11 came from Druridge Lane and Low Newton on 12th-13th (TB/MH/AA); four were at Hartside Village (Ingram) on 31st and three at Jesmond Dene (Paddy Freeman's) on 10th. Two were noted at Castle Island, Jesmond Dene (Windmill Hill), Ross Back Sands, Wallington Hall, Warkworth, West Stobswood, Widdrington and Wooden and singles at Brunswick Village, Howdon and Spindlestone.

**Robin** *Erithacus rubecula*

Up to eight were noted in Holywell Dene during the month (RJP) and four were at Jesmond Dene on 10th, with one to two also reported from Bolam Lake, Eachwick and Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay).

**Black Redstart** *Phoenicurus ochruros*

The bird first seen on 13th December 2015 was still present on 1st before reappearing from 24th-31st (DRW/SPP). Another was at Holy Island from 17th-21st (NNBC/SR).

**Stonechat** *Saxicola rubicola*

Peak counts were six at Druridge Pools and four at Ross Links on 17th (TB/CGK/GPK). Up to three were at Prestwick Carr and Howick and two at Blyth (Gloucester Lodge), Boulmer, Embleton, Holy Island, Low Newton, Monks' House Pool, Stag Rocks and West Hartford. Singles were also noted at Hauxley NR, Quarry House Moor, Tynemouth and West Stobswood.

**Dunnock** *Prunella modularis*

One to two were noted at Holywell Dene, Marden Estate, Cullercoats, Jesmond Dene and Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) throughout the month.

An unusually pigmented Dunnock

Morpeth by Peter Tatchell

**House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus*

Around 60 were in flocks at Beaconhill (Cramlington) on 14th and at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 28th (STH/BWG). 50 at Whittle Dene on 18th and 40 at a Marden Estate garden during the month (SR/ASJ). 30 noted at Rockcliffe on 24th and at Berwick Pier on 23rd(IJ/JMA). At Chapel House Estate 13 were on garden feeders and three hedgerow roosts noted of ten+ birds each in the month(MH).

**Tree Sparrow** *Passer montanus*

40 were present at Hazelrigg Mill on 14th, with 26 a good garden count at Corbridge on 16th (MH/AA/MR). Another 22 at garden feeders at Linden Hall on 30th (NFO). Around 20 were at Cresswell Pond on 17th (AJR). One to 17 were noted at a further 16 sites, including birds at garden feeders in Tynemouth and Marden Estate.

**Grey Wagtail** *Motacilla cinerea*

Three birds were at Cockshaw Burn (Hexham) on 16th (AJR). One to two were seen at a further 13 sites, including town centre birds at Blyth, Whitley Bay and Newcastle Bigg Market.

**Pied Wagtail** *Motacilla alba*

High counts of 31 and 28 made at Prestwick Carr on 1st and 20th (PCF). 18 were there on 17th feeding on frozen pools(MH). One to 12 were at nine other sites.

**Meadow Pipit** *Anthus pratensis*

At Backworth 35+ noted between 1st and 9th (CGK/MHS). Similar numbers at Prestwick Carr, with 33/34 seen on 17th/18th (PCF/MH) and 20 on 3rd (GB). 21 were at Gloucester Lodge (Blyth) on 22nd (STH). Inland at Haughton Strother 17 noted on 11th (MR). One to nine were at six further sites.

**Rock Pipit** *Anthus petrosus*

20 was the peak count during the month at Sandham Bay (Holy Island, IK). 12 were at Seaton Point (Boulmer) on 11th (AB/LB). Sixes were at the Tweed Estuary on 1st (MHS) and at Low Newton on 15th (STH). One to five were at five further sites.



**Water Pipit** *Anthus spinoletta*

Two birds were observed at Druridge Pools on 1st and at Monks' House Pool on 12th (TF/JF/AC). Singles of these seen at these sites throughout the month.



A Water Pipit at Druridge Pools  
Jonahan Farooqi on 1st January

**Brambling** *fringilla montifringilla*

60 birds observed over three days from 10th at Yearle, Wooler (SVM/AJM) was the month's only large gathering. One to three seen at three other sites.

**Chaffinch** *Fringilla coelebs*

A large flock of 200 were feeding in game crops at Quarry House Moor on 11th. 80 at Hazelrigg Mill on 19th (MH/AA). Four to 30 were seen at nine further widespread sites during January.

**Bullfinch** *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

15 at Etal and ten at Rothbury all month were the month's peak counts (Jjo/TRD/JD). Nine was the high count in an Old Hartley garden during the month (RJP). One to six were at 19 further sites.

**Greenfinch** *Chloris chloris*

40+ were found near Ellingham in a game crop on 13th (MHS). One to nine at nine further sites.

**Linnet** *Carduelis cannabina*

150 at Harper's Heugh on 9th (DM/STH/LR). 120+ were feeding in a game crop near Ellingham on 13th (MHS). 100 were noted at Druridge Bay Links on 1st (DM/STH). 35 at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 20th and 30 at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 24th (DM). 35+ at Hemscott Hill on 7th (PRM). One to 15 at five other sites.

**Twite** *Carduelis flavirostris*

160+ was a very good-sized flock found at Cocklawburn on 18th (MHu). 40 were seen at Fenham le Moor on 23rd (TRD/JD) and 33 on Holy Island on 21st (PRM), with 20 seen at these sites on other dates. Three noted at East Chevington on 1st and two at Budle Bay on 9th.

**Lesser Redpoll** *Carduelis caberet*

12-25 were present all month at Birling Carrs (PRM/TD/JD). Eight noted at Plessey Woods on 20th (TB). One to four were at seven other sites.

**Arctic Redpoll** *Carduelis hornemanni/exilipes*

The bird originally found by J. Rutter was present at Birling Carrs on 15th/16th of the month.

**Crossbill** *Loxia curvirostra*

Ten were at Haughton Strother on 4th and nine at Thrunton Woods on 16th, with eight at Blakehopeburnhaugh (Kielder) on 24th (MR/TRD/JD). Near the coast, seven moved N at Whitley Bay Golf Course on 26th (ASJ). Four were seen at Broadstruther and Druridge Bay within the month (JD/NFo).

**Goldfinch** *Carduelis carduelis*

100 at Druridge Links on 1st was the monthly maximum count (DM/STH). 66 was a good count attending feeders at East Ord (Berwick) on 21st. 65 in two charms were at Cresswell Pond on 17th (AJR). Flocks of 20 - 35 were seen at eight sites, including three in Whitley Bay. One to 15 at a further county-wide 12 sites.

**Siskin** *Carduelis spinus*

On 1st, 60 and 30 at Branton and East Chevington respectively were the month's peak counts. 20 were feeding in Alders at Berwick on 18th. 17 were noted at Howdon on 8th. One to 15 at 11 further locations.

**Snow Bunting** *Plectrophenax nivalis*

Numbers at Holy Island north shore in the month ranged from two to 35 birds on 16th (IK). Elsewhere, ten were at Budle Point on 31st (IBDa/KDa) and a single at Ross on 15th (MJC).

**Lapland Bunting** *Calciarius lapponicus*

The sole record was of one at Holy Island, north shore on 31st (IK).

**Yellowhammer** *Emberiza citrinella*

40 were at Lowick on 19th (MH/AA). Up to 31 counted in hedgerows at East Holywell/Backworth (with Reed Buntings) throughout the month (ASJ). 20+ at Birling Carrs (15th) and at Aydon (20th). On 1st, 19 observed at West Howdon, 15+ at Fenham Mill and 10+ at Elford and eight at Big Waters and six at Prestwick Carr. Three were at West Stobswood on 4th.

**Reed Bunting** *Emberiza Schoeniclus*

Up to 40 (with Yellowhammers) during the month at East Holywell/Backworth (MNC/ASJ).

Around 20, also with Yellowhammers, were at Aydon (Corbridge) on 20th (EC). Seven at Haughton Strother on 31st (MR), four were at Ingoe and Holywell Pond during the month and one to two at ten other sites including one on garden feeders in Cramlington(LJM).

**ESCAPES, HYBRIDS AND BIRDS OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN**December 2015

In December Bulletin under 'hybrids' a line has been carried forward from November suggesting an *Aythya* hybrid at Derwent Reservoir. That concerned a Bar-headed Goose in Nov.

**Escapes****Harris's Hawk** *Parabuteo unicinctus*

Very unusually two birds were noted together at Swallow Pond on 24th (SPP).

**Hybrids****Aythya hybrid** *Aythya sp*

The putative hybrid seen at Howdon Wetland last month was still present at least until 4th (CB). Others were found at Druridge Pools from 8th to 16th (MSH/PRM/TF/JFa) and also at Killingworth Lake on 18th (MSH). All of these birds were thought likely to be Tufted Duck x Pochard.



The Druridge Pool *aythya* hybrid  
by Jonathan Farooqi on 16th January

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Bamburgh Ringing Society, Berwick Wildlife Group, Natural History Society of Northumbria, North Northumberland Bird Club, Seaton Sluice Watch Tower. **Apologies for any accidental omissions**



## BULLETIN COMPILATION AND PRODUCTION

This bulletin was compiled by Graeme Bowman (Mute Swan to Ruddy Duck), Steve Laing (Red Grouse to Black-necked Grebe), Trevor Blake (Honey-buzzard to Crane), Steve Holliday (Avocet to Godwit), Ian Forsyth (Turnstone to Skua), Eddie Crabtree (Puffin to Great Black-backed Gull), Tim Dean (Escapes, Hybrids and Unknown Origin, List of Contributors, Highlights), Peter Fletcher (Feral Pigeon to Red-rumped Swallow), Mike Richardson (Cetti's Warbler to Pied Flycatcher), Alan Jack (Dunnock to Corn Bunting), Kathy Evans (WeBS Coastal Counts) and Steve Holliday (WeBS Inland Counts).

Thanks to David Sanders of NNBC for providing data.

Proof reading was by Mike Smith. Mail distribution by Paul Stewart.

Edited by Steve Barrett [NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com](mailto:NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com)

## RECORD SUBMISSION

Please email [ntbcorg@gmail.com](mailto:ntbcorg@gmail.com) for a copy of the standard spreadsheet and other details.

Location names and grid references: The use of standard location names and the include grid references as this greatly increases the value of records in subsequent analyses. A 1km square grid reference is the ideal e.g. NY8067 for Grindon Lough, but 2km square references (tetrads) are also acceptable e.g. NY86D in this case. A list of localities and their tetrad grid references (tetrad/Locality List) can be downloaded from the 'Resources & Downloads' section of the Club website at <http://www.ntbc.org.uk> – the use of these names, wherever possible, would be highly appreciated.

Could club members ensure they to submit records direct to NTBC rather than just Birdtrack. There may be an assumption by some members this happens automatically. We do not want to miss records.

## PHOTOGRAPHS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Please keep submitting your articles, photographs, sketches and illustrations for the bulletin. Thanks again to those who have supplied the excellent photographs. Please send to Steve Barrett at [NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com](mailto:NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com)

It is preferable if you re-size your photos before sending and a suggested size is 640 x 480 pixels. Please ensure you include the following information with your submissions: name, species, date taken, locality.

Photographs will not be used elsewhere without the photographer's permission.

## MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Annual membership costs £10 for a junior, £30 for an individual, and £32 for a family.

For membership enquiries please contact [ntbc@jobentley.plus.com](mailto:ntbc@jobentley.plus.com)

Membership subscriptions were due at the beginning of October. If you internet bank you can pay online: please include your name in the ref. It is helpful if you email me to let me know when you've made the transfer [ntbc@jobentley.plus.com](mailto:ntbc@jobentley.plus.com)

If you decide to set up a standing order please date the first payment at least a fortnight from your posting date to allow time to process with the bank. You can also set up your standing order directly with your bank if you wish; just let me know.

Finally, if you know anyone who might like to join NTBC please pass on the club information - new members are always welcome.

**Jo Bentley - Hon Treasurer**

## NTBC WEB SITE

The Club website is an excellent resource for all interested in birds in the north-east. There are numerous interesting sections, including a photograph gallery, site information and trip reports together with extensive reference information for birding in our area. Please submit any new content for the website to the main club email address.

## NTBC SIGHTINGS PAGE

The Sightings Page contains current reports by members. Access is from the NTBC website and an email notification is available for new postings. Members need to submit a request to be added to the website, specifying the email address they wish to post from before they can submit sightings to [ntbcorg@gmail.com](mailto:ntbcorg@gmail.com)

## INLAND WEBS COUNTERS

Inland WeBS counters needed in the future! Although there are no inland sites available at the present time it is envisaged that opportunities for taking over a site will become available during the next year or two. If you are interested in lodging your name, home location and contact details in case a site becomes open please contact Steve Holliday

email [steveholiday@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:steveholiday@hotmail.co.uk)

Steve Holliday

### NTBC and NTBC ARCHIVES 1958 - 2008

It has taken over seven years to locate and obtain the club's archival material and complete its sorting and listing. Essentially the purpose of the exercise was to collect and consolidate the records of the first 50 years of the Club's existence from 1958 – 2008.

The items have all been labelled and boxed or filed. At the end of November, after approaching the Natural History Society staff at the Great North Museum (Hancock), their archivist, June Holmes and David Noble-Rollin came to look at the collection of material. Impressed by the subject content, but a little over-awed by the quantity, they agreed to take custody of the archive as it stands. Their intention is to house the more immediate items at the Hancock with the possibility that less used and more bulky material may be moved to the Discovery Museum depending on the eventual availability of space. There will be no cost involved for the NTBC.

The Club's Collection will become part of the Natural History Society collection at the Great North Museum and will be available to serious researchers. The archive is accessible by appointment on Monday, Tuesday or Thursday 10am – 3.30pm.

As is common practice in other repositories, the Society's staff are not expected to undertake research in the records on behalf of outside enquirers. Researchers must make their own arrangements, if need be prior to their visit, to consult the NTBC archives. Any researcher using or publishing data from the Club's collection will be expected to make suitable acknowledgement.

An indication of the subject content of the archive is provided below :-

Material	Covering dates	Quantity
J D Parrack Collection Early Club/NHS history and correspondence	1956 – 1970	1 box file
Copies of the <b>Club's constitution</b>	1959/6 – 2013	1 file
<b>TBC Annual Reports</b>	1960 : 1963 – 9	2 files
<b>TBC Account books</b> Set of <b>audited accounts</b>	1968 – 1989 1974 – 2007	1 box file
Collection of <b>Club</b> occasional <b>publications</b> and breeding surveys		1 box file
<b>TBC Committee Minutes and correspondence</b>	Minutes 1979 – 2003 : 2004 – 2008 Corresp. 1973 - 2003	5 files 1 large file
NTBC Miscellaneous material. Box 1 Bird Race results ; North N/B Bird Club ; Birds of Prior's Park	1962 – 1992	1 box file
Material	Covering dates	Quantity
NTBC Miscellaneous material. Box 2 Includes items on Club questionnaires ; Local sites register ; 50th Anniversary	1984 - 2008	1 box file
NTBC <b>Conservation involvement</b>	1985 – 1999	1 box relating to local sites
<b>Breeding Atlas</b> – Mastercards	1988 – 1993	7 box files – a data card for each 2km tetrad
<b>Breeding Atlas</b> – Minutes of sub-committee : production data ; reviews		1 large file
<b>Winter Atlas</b> - Mastercards	1996 – 2000	7 box files – a data card for each 2km tetrad
<b>Winter Atlas</b> - Sub-committee minutes ; Newsletters ; grant applications		1 large file
<b>NTBC Ephemera</b> – Greetings cards ; Deacon prints ; Club programme cards ; mould for TBC lapel badge etc.		5 folders



<b>Geoff Macfarlane Memorial Trust</b> Minutes ; correspondence ; accounts	1983 - 2011	1 file : 1 account book
Northumberland & Tyne and Wear. 10 km square data for the <b>BTO Breeding Atlas, 1976</b>	1967 – 1972 County master cards (Geoff. Macfarlane) plus BTO additional data	1 packet of 10 km data cards
Northumberland & Tyne and Wear. 10 km square data for the <b>BTO Wintering Bird Atlas, 1986</b>	1981 - 1984	7 folders of computer printouts. County data at 2 km (tetrad) level
<b>WeBS</b> : Northumberland data : Correspondence ; selected wader counts ; maps	1993 – 2003/4	1 file
<b>Seaton Sluice Watch Tower (Old)</b>		
Article on sightings Extracts from log book Attendance book	1970 – 77 1979 1979 – 82	1 file
<b>Seaton Sluice Watch Tower (New)</b>		
Log books	1987 – 2008	4 box files
<b>Material</b>	<b>Covering dates</b>	<b>Quantity</b>
<b>County Committee Records</b>		
Papers – Wetmore Order	1958 - 1969	1 large file
Papers – Voous Order	1970 – 1980	4 large files
Local ornithological returns	1979 - 1982	1 box file
Papers – Voous Order	1983 – 1996	12 large files
Papers – Voous Order	1997	2 large files
County returns and decisions	1983 - 1998	5 large files
<i>NB. The above CRC various recorders had their confidential material</i>	<i>records are not totally either destroyed or refused</i>	<i>comprehensive as to hand on</i>
<b>TBC/NTBC Monthly Bulletins</b>	1958 – 1991	Complete. 6 hard-backed folders and 7 files
<b>Club history</b> – JCDay's abstract and synopsis of Club developments (2007/8)		1 file

John C Day

### BREEDING BIRD SURVEY(BBS) - 2016

The BTO/JNCC/RSPB Breeding Bird Survey is the main scheme for monitoring the changing fortunes of the UK's common breeding birds, generating population trends used to set conservation priorities.

In Northumberland and Tyneside, over 70 1km squares have been surveyed since the survey began in 1994, many for over 20 years. The squares are chosen randomly and cover all available habitats, reflecting the percentage of land use in the area.

After an initial reconnaissance visit in March to set up the transect route, two morning field recording visits are required:

**Early** - April/May: **Late** - late May/ June, at least four weeks apart.

All birds seen and heard should be recorded, as well as habitat details. There is also an optional mammal section to this.

The object is to visit the site at the same time each year, or as close as possible, to enable comparisons to be made.

Several extra squares have become available this year as observers have moved away or become infirm. The list of vacant 1km squares has approximate locations, with the grid reference of the bottom left-hand corner (SW).

**BBS 2016 vacant squares**

<b>Grid ref: SW corner of 1km square</b>	<b>Approximate Location</b>	<b>OS Map</b>	<b>Landranger</b>
NT7108	Deerlee Knowe	80	
NT7708	Coquet Head	80	
NT8817	Kings Seat, Cheviots	80	
NT9910	Alnham	81	
NU0637	Buckton Moor	75	
NU0832	Belford Moor	75	
NU1108	Edlingham	81	
NU2127	West of Long Nanny	75	
NY6080	Cumbria	80	
NY6081	Bewcastle Fell/Cumbria	80	
NY6781	Whickhope Nick, Kielder	80	
NY7398	Blakehope Nick, Kielder	80	
NY7994	Kielder Forest, west of Blackburnhead	80	
NY9980	Ladywell, Gt Bavington	81	
NZ0075	East of Hallington	87	
NZ0184	Kirkwhelpington	81	
NZ0473	Nr Matfen	87	
NZ0790	Broomfield Fell, Netherwitton	81	
NZ2582	Bedlington	81	
NZ2681	Bedlington	81	
NZ2781	Bebside, E Bedlington	81	

For further information please contact Muriel Cadwallender, BBS Regional Organiser,

email - [tomandmurielcadwallender@hotmail.com](mailto:tomandmurielcadwallender@hotmail.com) or visit [www.bto.org/bbs](http://www.bto.org/bbs)

**ST MARY'S ISLAND HIDE**

The NTBC committee has been informed by Mr Adam Kelsey, the Manager of St Mary's Lighthouse and Visitor Centre, of forthcoming changes to the access arrangements to the hide on the Island. The relevant part of his email is quoted below.

"Previously keys to the hide have been sold by the Council to allow access to hide outside of normal lighthouse opening times, but although this practice was stopped some time ago, it has come to the attention of Council officers that some of the keys issued before this point have been copied and circulated to other users. To this extent the council therefore no longer has any control over access to the hide, resulting in instances where the hide is in use without council staff present to supervise, which could potentially result in instances of misuse and the inability to respond in the event of an urgent incident. As such following a review of operations it has been decided that the locks to the hide will be changed to invalidate the keys in circulation and from that point access will be restricted to times when Council staff are on site to supervise operations. The hide will be opened throughout all normal openings of St. Mary's Lighthouse and Visitor Centre and access outside of these times will still be permissible, either by prior arrangement or via direct communication with staff who are on site most days throughout the year, even outside of normal openings."

The committee hopes that club members will cooperate with this protocol. Mr Kelsey can be contacted via email at [Adam.Kelsey@northtyneside.gov.uk](mailto:Adam.Kelsey@northtyneside.gov.uk) and by phone at 0191 200 8650.



## INLAND WeBS COUNTS: NORTH HUMBERLAND

Version: Interim

Year: 2016  
Month: JANUARY

[illegible]

# Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

<http://www.ntbc.org.uk/>

Bulletin 2015 No 2

MONTHLY SUMMARY FEBRUARY 2016

31st March 2016



## CONTENTS

WeBS inland

WeBS coastal ( December 2015 and January included)

BIN 2015 Photographs request

## CLASSIFIED LIST HIGHLIGHTS

Egyptian Goose	One at Holywell Pond on 24th.
American Wigeon	Male still present at Grindon Lough all month.
Black Scoter	Male still being reported until 5th at Stag Rocks.
Smew	The popular first-winter female was still at Killingworth Lake all month.
Bittern	Two still being seen at Gosforth Park and single sporadically at East Chevington.
Black-necked Grebe	One still at East Chevington until 21st.
Marsh Harrier	The female at East Chevington still wintering.
Long-billed Dowitcher	The first-winter remained at Cresswell Pond all month.
Caspian Gull	Another first-winter noted this time at North Shields Fish Quay on 16th.
Glaucous Gull	First-winter at Branton GP on 27th.
Hooded Crow	One at Chatton on 21st.
Waxwing	Popular single at Widdrington from 13th to 16th.
Great Grey Shrike	One in Harwood Forest.
Black Redstart	Single at Tynemouth all month.
Coues's Arctic Redpoll	One at Warkworth still present.



One of the most photographed birds of the winter  
The first winter female Smew at Killingworth Lake by Tim Dean

## COMMITTEE NEWS

Editor Mike Richardson is stepping down after several years as Editor of Birds in Northumbria. On behalf of the Club the Committee would like to thank him for all his hard work in maintaining the high standard of our annual report. Andy Mould has kindly agreed to take over the role. Welcome.



## INDOOR MEETINGS

NTBC indoor meetings are held at Northern Rugby Club, McCracken Park, Great North Road, Newcastle, NE3 2DT starting at 7.00pm and generally finish between 9.00pm-9.30pm. The next meeting of the 2015-2016 season is:

April 14th 2016

### Brian Sykes – West Papua

A talk of an exciting trip to the little-visited West Papua.

## FIELD TRIPS

Some great trips are planned for the spring.

### Langholm

24th April 2016

Contact Steve Anderson for details [seaswan@btinternet.com](mailto:seaswan@btinternet.com)

### Kielder

15th May 2016

Contact Martin Davison for details [martindavison@gmail.com](mailto:martindavison@gmail.com)

### Geltsdale

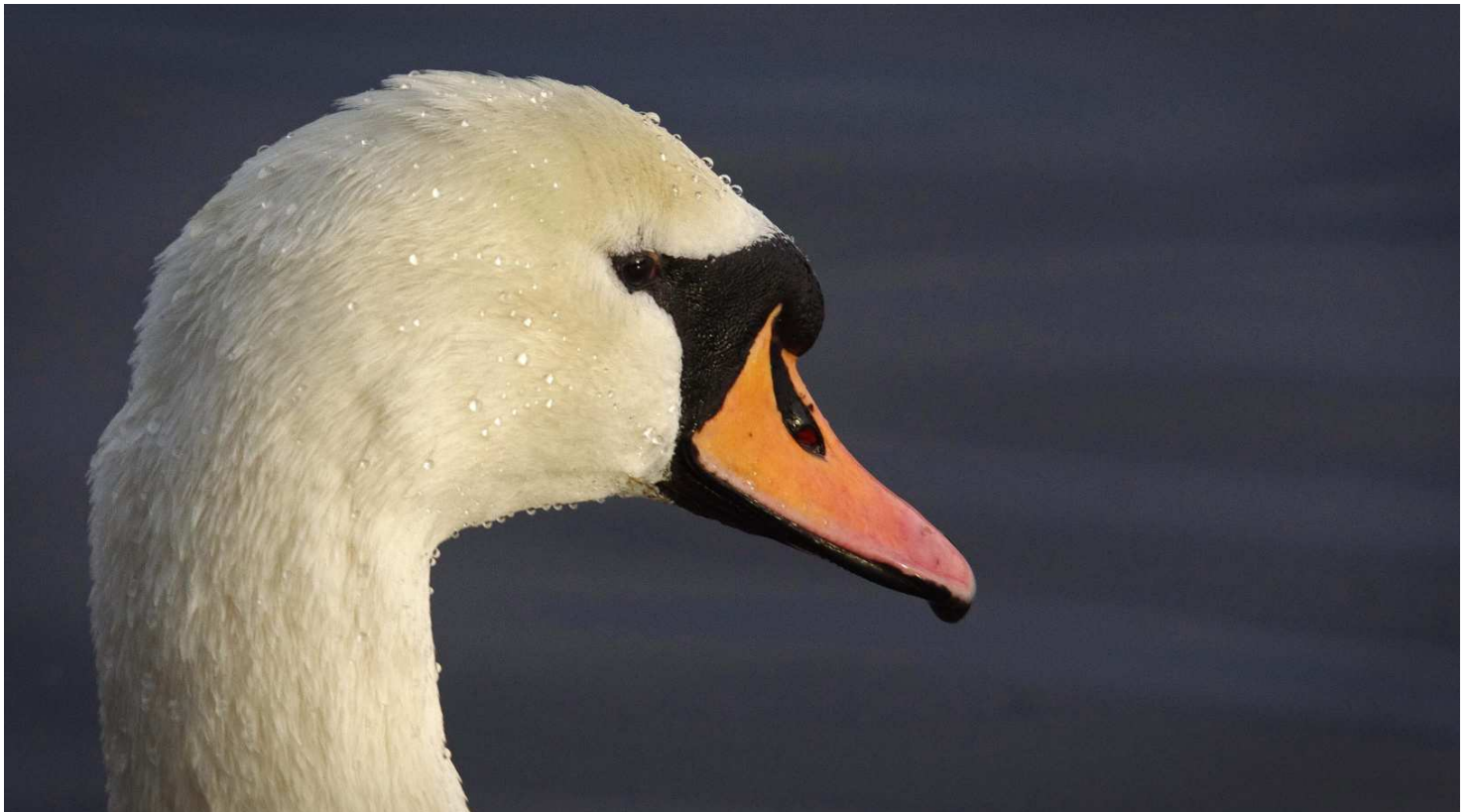
23rd May 2016

Contact Trevor Blake for details [trevor.1958@live.co.uk](mailto:trevor.1958@live.co.uk)

## CLASSIFIED LIST

### Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

Peak concentrations were 96 at QEII CP Lake on 20th (CDH), 48 at Killingworth Lake on 7th (PRM), 30 at the Tweed Estuary on 13th (JMA), 30 at Warkworth Lane on 1st (JMA), 25 at Warkworth (JMA), and 13-14 at Bolam Lake (CDB), Gosforth Park NR (DM *et al.*) and Howdon (CB). Four to six were also at Chibburn, Grindon Lough and Newcastle Leazes Park. More unusual were singles at Derwent Reservoir (IFo) and Paddy Freeman's Lake, Jesmond Dene (MJCo), where the species is typically scarce.



Mike Carr gets eye to eye with an adult Mute Swan  
Bolam Lake  
12th February

### Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

46 were at Horncliffe on 2nd (JDL), 46 at Warkworth on 4th (IK/ASH) while 39 at Birling Carrs (Warkworth) on 2nd contained five juveniles (MH/AA), about 20 were at Wark on 25th (SVM/AJM), 11-19 at Druridge Pools, Warkworth Lane and Whittle Dene Reservoirs (five juveniles), and seven near QEII CP. Two to three were also at Castron, Shield on the Wall and West Ord.



An adult Whooper Swan at Druridge Pools by Jack Bucknall

**Bean Goose** *Anser fabalis*

Three at the Long Nanny Estuary on 7th comprised two of the 'Tundra' *rossicus* race and one of the 'Taiga' *fabalis* race (CB/JGS).

**Pink-footed Goose** *Anser brachyrhynchus*

A total of 470 moved W at Melkridge on 4th (SJH), 240 flew W at Haughton Strother GP on 3rd (MR), 130 N at Blyth Harbour on 24th (STH), and 62-85 N at East Ord, Prestwick Carr and Swallow Pond. Nocturnal movements to N were noted at Shiremoor on several dates during the month (CGK). About 3,000 were at Cresswell on 4th (IK/ASH) and at nearby Ellington on 14th (TB), about 2,000 at Doddington on 4th and 27th (TRD/JD), 900 at Holywell Dene (RJP), 800 at Gloucester Lodge, Blyth (MSH), 500-650 at Budle Bay (CGK), Ellington (TB) and Low Newton (JPL/FS), and 375 at Fenham Flats. Counts of 120-200 came from Branton, Doddington and Holywell Pond, while 58-80 were at Druridge and Grindon Lough, and 18 at Cocklawburn.

**White-fronted Goose** *Anser flavirostris*

Eurasian *albifrons* race birds involved 15 with Pink-footed Geese near Cresswell on 4th (IK/ASH), ten near Druridge Pools on 6th (TF/JFa), seven at Cocklawburn between 16th-29th (MHu), three at Budle Bay on 18th (CDB), three at East Chevington on 6th (NFO) and 13th (NFO), and one to two at Backworth (CGK/GPK), East Holywell (MSH) and Newbiggin-Woodhorn (CB/JGS/NFO *et al.*).

Birds of the Greenland *flavirostris* race included six at Druridge-East Chevington on 14th (JL) and two there on 6th (NFO), five at Newbiggin-Woodhorn between 14th-22nd (TF/JFa/NFO *et al.*), five adults at Cresswell Pond on 12th (SPP), and three adults at Grindon Lough regularly between 9th-24th (SJH/PRM).

**Greylag Goose** *Anser anser*

14 flew S at West Ord on 21st (MHu). The largest gatherings were 330 at Budle Bay on 26th (CGK), 240 at Cocklawburn on 3rd (MHu), 140-182 at Big Waters (GB/SPP), Druridge (MSH) and Holywell Dene (RJP), and 70-82 at Haughton Strother and near Otterburn. Counts of 20-34 came from Bywell Haughs, Gosforth Park NR, Grindon Lough, Prestwick Carr and Swallow Pond, while one to six were at Bothal and Middle Ord Ponds, Cramlington and the Tweed Estuary.

**Canada Goose** *Branta canadensis*

Grindon Lough attracted a peak of 386 on 4th (PRM), 158 were at Bothal Pond on 14th (TF/JFa), 154 at Derwent Reservoir on 16th (IFo), 122 at Killingworth Lake on 16th (LJM), and 84 at Big Waters (GB). Groups of 18-35 were at Alnmouth, Bolam and QEII CP Lakes, Castle Island, Druridge Pools, Newcastle Leazes Park and Swallow Pond, and one to eight at the Tweed Estuary and West Ord.

**Barnacle Goose** *Branta leucopsis*

At Budle Bay-Harper's Haugh, about 1,200 were noted on 18th (CDB), 100 on 22nd (SMA), and 26-45 between 24th-26th (MSH/CGK), while 300-500 were in the Elwick-Fenham Flats area of Lindisfarne NNR on 9th (MH/AA). Elsewhere, 14 were at Druridge Bay on 2nd (MH/AA), seven to eight at Grindon Lough between 4th-14th (SJH/PRM), four near Cresswell, and one at Doddington.





The Barnacle Geese at Budle Bay by Chris Barlow

**Brent Goose** *Branta bernicla*

1,300 pale-bellied *hrota* race birds at Budle Bay on 26th was a high count for the site (CGK), and 400+ were at Harper's Heugh, near Budle Bay, on 24th (MSH). One or two dark-bellied *bernicla* race birds were noted in the latter flock (MSH).

**Egyptian Goose** *Alopochen aegyptiacus*

One was at Holywell Pond on 24th (ASJ).

Egyptian Goose

Holywell Pond

Alan Jack

24th February



**Shelduck** *Tadorna tadorna*

Four flew N at St Mary's on 15th (MSH) and one N at Ellington on 28th (TB). Budle Bay held 220 on 27th (CGK), 52 were at Howdon on 22nd (CB), 49 at the Blyth Estuary on 19th (LJM), 19 at Cresswell Pond (MSH), five to nine at Bothal Pond (TD), Castle Island (DM), Elswick (DM) and Widdrington Moor Lake (MSH), and two to three at Swallow Pond (GPK/SPP). Two to three were further inland at Grindon Lough between 20th-29th (SJH/PRM).

**Wigeon** *Anas penelope*

Peak counts involved 930 at Grindon Lough on 4th and 14th (PRM), 321 at Big Waters on 16th (SPP), 222 at Bothal Pond on 19th (TF/JFa), 220 at Budle Bay on 26th (CGK), 200 at Cresswell Pond (CDB) and 200 at Druridge Pools (MSH), 153-190 at Derwent Reservoir (IFo) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs (EC), and 100-110 at Alnmouth, Amble and Gosforth Park NR. One to nine were at five further sites. Display was noted at Big Waters on 21st (GB).

**American Wigeon** *Anas Americana*

A drake, first noted in January 2016, was present on 4th (PRM), and 24th and 29th (SJH).



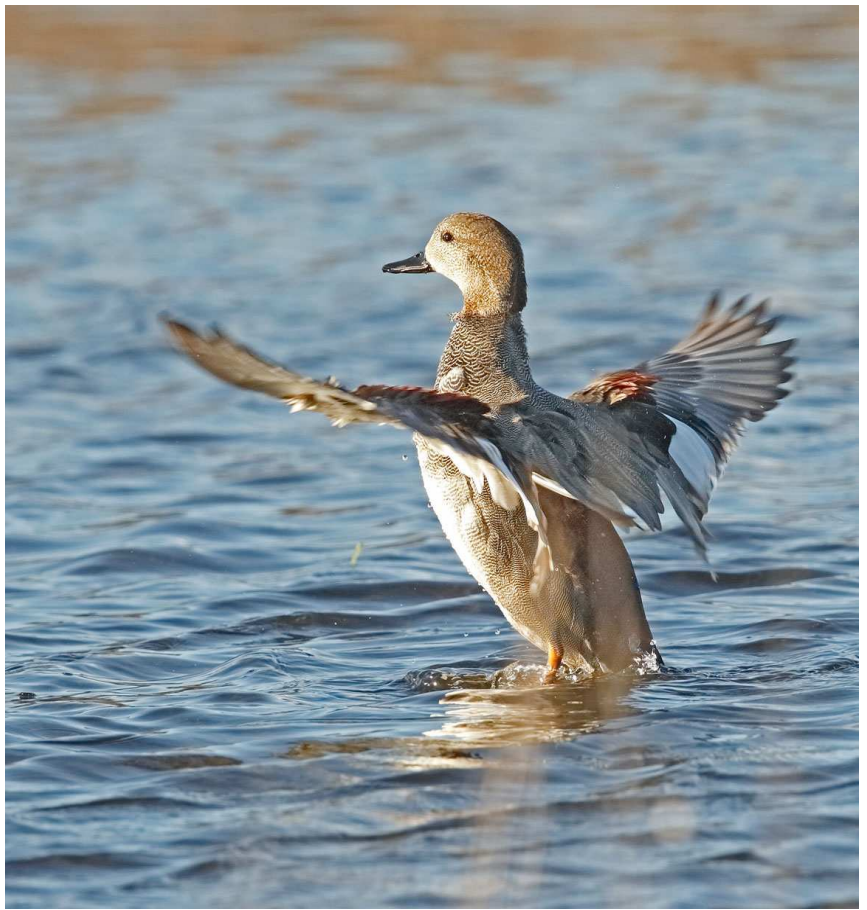
**Gadwall** *Anas strepera*

Monthly peaks were 31 at Bothal Pond on 26th (TF/JFa), 31 at Swallow Pond on 2nd (GPK), 19 at Arcot Pond on 5th (LJM), 19 at St Mary's Wetland on 16th (AC), 12 at Woodhorn Flashes (CB/JGS), and five to eight at Big Waters, the Blyth Estuary, Caistron, Castle Island, Gosforth Park NR and St Mary's Wetland. Two to three were also at Backworth, East Chevington, Howdon and QEII CP Lake.

A Gadwall

Howdon Wetland

Colin Bradshaw

**Teal** *Anas crecca*

581 were at Big Waters on 16th (SPP), 430 at Budle Bay on 27th (CGK), 400 at Cresswell Pond on 12th (SPP), about 400 at Holy Island during the month (IK), 396 at Grindon Lough on 29th (SJH), 244 at Howdon (CB), 105 at Arcot Pond (STH), and 50-91 at Backworth, Bothal, Middle Ord and Swallow Ponds, the Blyth Estuary, Bolam Lake, Druridge Pools, Prestwick Carr and Ray Estate. Counts of 16-40 came from Castle Island, Elswick, Haughton Strother GP, Heddon-on-the-Wall, St Mary's Wetland and Warkworth. Many displayed at Big Waters on 7th (GB).



A Drake Common Teal at Howdon Wetland by Colin Bradshaw

**Mallard** *Anas platyrhynchos*

178 at Derwent Reservoir on 16th (IFo) was the sole three-figure report. Other peak counts were 78 at the Tweed Estuary on 19th (MHu), 62 at Bothal Pond on 12th (TD), 54-58 at Grindon Lough (SJH) and Haughton Strother GP (MR), and 32-35 at Arcot and West Allotment Ponds, Bolam Lake, Boulmer and Marden Quarry. Groups of ten to 28 were at Airy Holm Reservoir, Byker, Castle Island, Cocklawburn and Middle Ord Ponds, Lewisburn, Morpeth, Newcastle Leazes Park, QEII CP Lake, St Mary's Wetland, Tynemouth Park, Walltown Quarry, Wark and Warkworth.





A pair of Mallard at Killingworth Lake by Adriana Buskin

**Pintail** *Anas acuta*

The popular Fenham Flats section of Lindisfarne NNR held 207 on 7th (JL) and 157 (79 drakes) on 9th (MH/AA). Typically far fewer were noted elsewhere, with three at Druridge Pools on 15th (TF/JFa) and two on 18th (TRD/JD), two at Berwick on 25th (DGB), Cresswell Pond on 3rd and 18th (CDB/MSH) and Grindon Lough on 24th (SJH). Singles were also at Arcot and Swallow Ponds, Big Waters, Bolam Lake, Budle Bay, Derwent Reservoir, Grindstonelaw, Holy Island Lough and the Tweed Estuary.



A drake Pintail at Bolam Lake by Chris Barlow



**Shoveler** *Anas clypeata*

Swallow Pond held a peak of 40 on 1st (GPK), 16 were at Druridge Pools on 18th (TRD/JD), 14 at Bothal Pond on 26th (TF/JFa), four to six at Big Waters (GB) and Monks' House Pool (DGB/JPL/JDL). One to two were also at Airy Holm Reservoir, Arcot Pond, Budle Bay and Gosforth Park NR.

**Pochard** *Aythya ferina*

23 (16 drakes) were at Holywell Pond on 26th (GPK), 16 (12 drakes) at Big Waters on 20th (GB), 14 at QEII CP Lake on 20th (the highest WeBS count at this site since 2003; CDH), and 12 at Killingworth Lake on 16th (LJM). Eight were at Swallow Pond (GPK), three to four at Arcot Pond (DM) and Bothal Pond (TF/JFa), and one to two at Branton GP, East Chevington, Grindon Lough, Haughton Strother GP, Marden Quarry and West Allotment Ponds.

**Tufted Duck** *Aythya fuligula*

Favoured localities were Killingworth Lake, Grindon Lough and QEII CP Lake, with respective peaks of 106 on 16th (LJM), 71 on 24th (SJH) and 45 on 20th (CDH). Other peak counts were 42 at Big Waters (GB), 30-36 at Haughton Strother GP (MR) and Newcastle Leazes Park (GB/DM), 20-29 at Holywell and West Allotment Ponds, and 12-18 at Arcot, Bothal and Swallow Ponds, and Howdon. Five to nine were also at Bolam Lake, Bywell Haughs, Cocklawburn Pond, Jesmond Dene and Tynemouth Park.

A drake Tufted Duck

Killingworth Lake

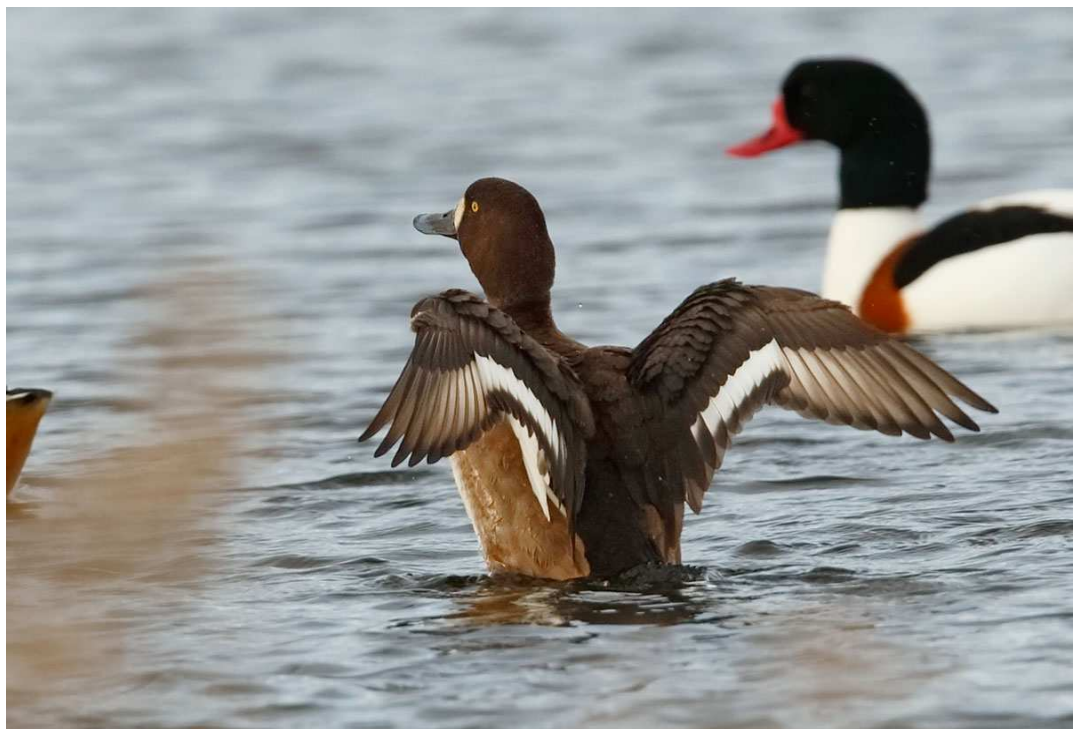
Adriana Buskin

**Scaup** *Aythya marila*

Two were at East Chevington north pool on 6th (TF/JFa/NFO) and singles on 3rd and 18th (TRD/JD). Singles were at Howdon on 8th (CB) and Killingworth Lake on 16th (LJM). Further inland, three (one drake) were at Grindon Lough on 14th (PRM) and two on 24th (SJH), a drake at Haughton Strother GP on several dates between 2nd-29th (MR).

The Howdon female Scaup  
photographed by Colin  
Bradshaw  
who commented

"This bird caused a lot of  
controversy with its Lesser  
Scaup-like wing pattern but this  
is within the range of 1W female  
Great Scaup"



**Eider** *Somateria mollissima*

50 were at Blyth Harbour on 8th (JMA), 28 at Meadow Haven (Berwick) on 7th (MHu), 20-23 at Amble Harbour (display noted on 5th; JMA) and Berwick North Shore (MHu), 15 at Boulmer and two at the Tweed Estuary.

**Long-tailed Duck** *Clangula hyemalis*

At Stag Rocks, 60 were noted on 27th (JBu), 50 on 26th included 44 drakes (TBr), and one to 30 were noted in the Budle Point-Stag Rocks area regularly between 4th-24th (MSH/CGK *et al.*). A gathering of 20 in the St Cuthbert's Island area of Holy Island on 14th contained several pairs and displaying groups (IK). Three were off Ross Back Sands on 17th (*per* NNBC) and one at Guile Point (Holy Island).

**Common Scoter** *Melanitta nigra*

110 were off Budle Point on 26th (CGK), 50-55 at Stag Rocks between 4th-23rd (BRS/*per* NNBC) and 50 off Amble on 4th (JMA). A duck was noted on East Chevington north pool on 6th, 13th and 18th (TRD/JD/NFO).

**Black Scoter** *Melanitta americana*

A drake was at Stag Rocks on 4th-5th (EC/JSB/*per* NNBC).

**Velvet Scoter** *Melanitta fusca*

On 15th, two flew N at Seaton Sluice (SSWT) and Tynemouth (DRW), and one N at Hadston Carrs (TF/JFa).

**Goldeneye** *Bucephala clangula*

Peak counts were 94 at the Tweed Estuary on 19th (MHu), 74 at East Chevington on 2nd (MH/AA) and 15th (TF/JFa), 48 at Grindon Lough on 24th (SJH), 40 at Berwick on 25th (DGB), and 20-29 at Big Waters (GB), Druridge Pools (JMA), and Killingworth (PRM) and QEII CP (CDH) Lakes. Counts of ten to 15 came from Beadnell Bay, Bolam Lake, Caistron, Castle Island and 'Tweed-Whiteadder', while five to eight were at Bothal Pond, Branton GP and Horncliffe, and three to four at Budle Bay, Derwent and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, and Swallow Pond. Display was noted at East Chevington north pool on 21st (IK) and Grindon Lough on 24th (SJH).

**Smew** *Mergellus albellus*

A 'red-head' was at Killingworth Lake on sporadic dates between 1st-29th, where it gave very close views at times (CB/TRD/JD/LJM *et al.*). Single 'red-heads' were at Gosforth Park NR on 5th (GPK), and Big Waters on 16th (SPP) and 28th (GB). The latter was aged as a first-winter female on upper-wing pattern. Single 'red-heads', thought to be different birds, were noted at Gosforth Park NR and Killingworth Lake on 21st (DM/STH/PJA).

The popular Smew at  
Killingworth Lake

by Colin Bradshaw

**Red-breasted Merganser** *Mergus serrator*

One flew N at Tynemouth on 14th (DRW). A total of 14 noted on three Druridge Bay reserves on 18th included six pairs (MH), 13 were at Budle Bay on 26th, when display was noted (CGK), nine were at Ladyburn Lake on 15th (TF/JFa), six at East Chevington on 6th (TF/JFa), and six at the Tweed Estuary on 19th (MHu). Three to four were at Boulmer, Druridge Pools, Spittal Bay, Warkworth and Widdrington Moor Lake, and one to two at Berwick North Shore, the Blyth Estuary, Castle Island and Cresswell Pond. One on the River Tweed at Horncliffe on 18th was more unusual (JDL).



**Goosander** *Mergus merganser*

26 at Killingworth Lake on 7th included 20 drakes (PRM), 21 were noted on the 'Tweed-Whiteadder' (BWG), 15 at Horncliffe on 5th (JDL), five to nine at Bolam Lake (CDB), Close House (MH), Rothbury (MJC), the Tweed Estuary (MHu) and Warkworth (MJC), and three to four at Branton GP, Kilham, Newcastle Exhibition Park, Thrum Mill, West Ord and Wylam. One to two were also at Airy Holm Reservoir, Castron, Farnley Haughs, Jesmond Dene, Ladyburn Lake, Mitford and Wark.



A fine drone Goosander  
Druridge Bay CP  
Jack Bucknall

**Red-legged Partridge** *Alectoris rufa*

14 were at Hartley West Farm (Holywell Dene) on 7th (RJP) and eight were at Fell House Farm (Plenmeller Common) on 28th (SJH).

**Red Grouse** *Lagopus lagopus*

In the Cheviots, 30 were at Goldcleugh (Hawsen Burn) on 12th (IRD) and 20 displaying birds near the Carey Burn on 28th (MJC). Also on 28th, in the Pennines, most birds seen were displaying males, including 23 at Paxhill (Allenheads), 18 in the Carrshield area, nine at Knockshield Burn and four at Swinhope Shield (SJH). 20 were in the Rowley Burn area (Hexhamshire Common) on 24th (AJH).

**Black Grouse** *Tetrao tetrix*

On 28th, in the north Pennines, a total of 25 birds were counted which included ten males at Swinhope Shield, a group of six greyhens with a single male at the Knockshield Burn area (Allendale), five males at Carrshield and three males at Paxhill (Allenheads) (SJH). Two were at Rowley Burn on 24th (AJH).

**Grey Partridge** *Perdix perdix*

High numbers were still reported from Goswick Farm with 21 present on 22nd (BWG). Elsewhere, five were at Prestwick Carr on 6th, two at Beacon Hill (Cramlington) on 28th and a pair on the edge of Blanchland Moor on 29th.

**Pheasant** *Phasianus colchicus*

One was at Hartley West Farm (Holywell Dene) throughout the month and another regularly visited an Old Hartley garden (RJP).

**Red-throated Diver** *Gavia stellata*

The highest count was 12 seen off Budle Point on 27th (CGK), followed by ten at Cresswell on 18th (TRD/JD). Seven, all still in winter plumage, were at St Cuthbert's Island (Holy Island) on 26th (IK) and five were at Stag Rocks on 9th (JDL) and Berwick on 25th (DGB/JDL/NNBC). One to three were reported from ten other coastal localities, including one on the River Tyne at Tynemouth.

**Black-throated Diver** *Gavia arctica*

Two were just offshore at Budle Point on 26th (CGK) and singles were reported from Low Newton and St. Cuthbert's Island (Holy island).



**Great Northern Diver** *Gavia immer*

Singles flew N past St Mary's (MSH) and Hadston Carrs (Druridge Bay) (TF/JFa) on 15th. Two were at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 4th (per NNBC) and singles were at Beadnell Bay on 24th and Budle Point on 26th.

**Fulmar** *Fulmarus glacialis*

At Tynemouth, 27 (including ten pairs) were noted around the Priory cliffs on 27th (SPP) and 12 (six pairs) were sitting on cliffs below Dunstanburgh Castle on 25th (TD).



A Fulmar soars at Snab Point by Chris Barlow

**Gannet** *Morus bassanus*

The first substantial movements of early spring were observed past Holy Island with 150 adults moving N on 28th (IK). The only other records were of three S past Meadow Haven (Berwick) on 10th (BWG/MHu) and three N at Hadston Carrs (Druridge Bay) on 15th (TF/JFa).

**Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo*

As last month, the two highest counts came from North Shields Fish Quay and Blyth Harbour with 65 on 10th and 42 on 24th respectively (MSH/STH). 14 were present during a WeBS count at Berwick North Shore on 18th (MHu) and one to seven were reported from Beacon Point (Newbiggin), Big Waters NWT, Black Middens (North Shields), Bolam Lake, Castle Island, Derwent Reservoir, Gosforth Park NR, Holywell Dene, Kielder Water, Morpeth, Newburn, Prestwick Carr, QE11 Country Park, Wark and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. Two birds of the continental *sinensis* race were at North Shields Fish Quay on 10th and a single was at the QE11 Country Park on 4th (MSH).

**Shag** *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

Low numbers reported this month, presumably as birds relocated to offshore breeding sites. The only records from Seaton Sluice Watch Tower were two N on 15th. Nine were seen during a WeBS count at Berwick North Shore on 18th (MHu) and Blyth Harbour held four adults and one juvenile on 24th (STH). The only other records were of one or two in the R Tweed Estuary and a single at Druridge.

**Bittern** *Botaurus stellaris*

Two were seen at Gosforth Park on 27th (TF/JFa) and a single was watched preening and stalking at East Chevington on 12th (MH).

**Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta*

The highest count was three in Budle Bay on 25th (JPL) and three also at a roost at Warkworth on 4th (JMA). Two were present at Fenham Flats and Holywell Dene and singles were at Amble, Backworth, Bassington NR (Cramlington), Beal, Big Waters NWT, Gosforth Park, Goswick Farm, Horncliffe, Horndean Burn, Swallow Pond, Sleaford Burn and West Ord (Berwick). One was in full song at Beal on 26th (BWG).

**Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea*

20 were present during a WeBS count in the Tweed Estuary on 19th (MHu), nine were at Gosforth Park on 5th (GPK) and five were at Druridge Pools on 18th (JMA). One to four were at 15 other localities.

**Little Grebe** *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Castle Island (River Wansbeck) again proved to be a very popular location with a peak of 12 there during a WeBS count on 21st (DM/STH/PJA) and Cresswell Pond peaked at four on 3rd (TRD/JD). Four was the maximum at Caistron on 21st (JD) and one to three were at several further typical localities with several coming into breeding plumage.

**Great Crested Grebe** *Podiceps cristatus*

Numbers started to build up this month with five (two pairs plus a single) at Derwent Reservoir by 29th (IFo) and two in breeding plumage at Killingworth Lake from 21st (GB/DM/STH/PJA). Elsewhere singles were at Coney Garth (Bothal Pond), Hartley Bay, Haughton Strother GP and Spittal Bay (Berwick).

**Red-Necked Grebe** *Podiceps grisegena*

The only sighting was one at Fenham Flats (Lindisfarne NNR) on 9th (JDL).

**Slavonian Grebe** *Podiceps auritus*

The highest counts this winter so far were towards the end of the month with 11 at St. Cuthbert's Island (Holy Island) on 26th and 27th (IK), and at least ten off Budle Point on 26th (CGK) and Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 27th (JBU). Singles were at Berwick Pier, Black Rocks (Cheswick), East Chevington North Pool, Meadow Haven (Berwick) and Spittal Bay.

**Black-necked Grebe** *Podiceps nigrocollis*

The single bird at East Chevington remained until at least 21st by which time it was showing signs of darkening into breed dress (IK/TRD/JD/NFO *et al.*).

**Red Kite** *Milvus Milvus*

Two records this month with an untagged adult W over Wylam station on 15th (MH) and another single drifting SW over the observer's garden at Chapel House (Newcastle) on 18th (IK).

**Marsh Harrier** *Circus aeruginosus*

The over-wintering female was reported from East Chevington on 6th, 13th, 22nd and 28th (TF/JFa/NFO/MH).

**Hen Harrier** *Circus cyaneus*

On the 5th a male flew SW near Harwood (ADMc).

**Goshawk** *Accipiter gentilis*

At Harwood Forest on 23rd an adult was displaying and it brought up three more birds including a juvenile male (MH/AA) and on 16th a single bird, possibly a female, was at a confidential site (TBr).

**Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter nisus*

One to two birds were at an Old Hartley garden throughout the month (RJP) and two males were in the observer's garden at Northburn (Cramlington) on several dates (LJM) and a pair was at Howdon on 8th (CB). Single birds were seen at Alnwick, Bradford (near Belford), Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Cramlington, Gosforth Park NR, Hepscott Park, Holywell Dene, Jesmond Dene, Lesbury, Melkridge, Paxhill (Allenheads), Ridley, Ulgham and at Whittonstall.

**Common Buzzard** *Buteo buteo*

Eight birds were in Hulne Park (Alnwick) on 22nd (MH), six were at Halton Red House on 7th (SR) and four at Derwent Reservoir on 25th (IFo). Three birds were at Lambley on 8th (SJH), Hawkhill (Alnwick) on 16th (JMA), Cresswell Pond (CDB) and Gosforth Park NR (SPP) on 18th and near Haltwhistle on 28th (SJH). One to two birds were at over 30 sites.

**Water Rail** *Rallus aquaticus*

Up to 5+ birds were reported from Gosforth Park NR throughout the month (DM/STH/PJA *et al.*), 3+ were at Cresswell Pond on 4th (ADMc) and 19th (MSH). Two birds were at Big Waters NWT on 21st (GB) and single birds were also heard or seen at East Chevington, Killingworth Lake, Newbiggin and Prestwick Carr.

**Moorhen** *Gallinula chloropus*

21 birds were at Killingworth Lake on 7th (PRM), 13 at Castle Island on 21st (DM/STH/PJA) and 12 were at Big Waters NWT on 17th (GB). One to eight birds were seen at 11 sites

**Coot** *Fulica atra*

69 were at QEII CP on 20th (CDH), 58 at Bothal Pond on 12th (TD) and 54 at Killingworth Lake on 7th (PRM) were the highest counts. One to twelve birds were at Arcot Pond, Berwick, Bolam Lake, Cocklawburn Pond, Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Gosforth Park NR, Grindon Lough, Howdon, Humshaugh (Haughton Strother GP), Leazes Park (Newcastle), River Tweed Estuary and Tynemouth,

**Oystercatcher** *Haematopus ostralegus*

The largest coastal gathering was 183 at Berwick North Shore on 18th (MHu), whilst inland Derwent Reservoir saw two early returnees on 10th, 16 on 11th and an influx of 126 on 24th (IFo). High-tide roosts included 121 at St Mary's Island on 28th (ASJ) and 115 at Budle Bay on 26th (CGK). Caistron also held a flock of 90 on 21st which were doubtless moving through the area (JD), as were 40 at Coanwood on 27th (JMA). 50 were noted at Alnmouth GC on 9th (JMA) and Haughton Strother GP held 23 on 19th (MR). Elsewhere, 19-34 were logged at Blyth harbour, Boulmer, Cullercoats Bay, the R. Tweed Estuary and West Ord, with one to two making their first appearances at around nine additional inland sites.

**Golden Plover** *Pluvialis apricaria*

Some large flocks were noted with ca.1,000 at Grindon Lough on 9th and 800 remaining here on 24th (SJH). On the coast, counts at St Mary's Island numbered 800-950 on several dates throughout the month (ASJ/SPP/TRD/JD); nearby Backworth held 360 on 27th (GPK). Further groups included 320 in fields between Druridge Pool-East Chevington on 14th (JL), 250+ at Prestwick Carr on 18th (PCF), 220 at Blanchland Moor on 29th (IFo), 92 at Fell House Farm (Plenmeller Common) on 28th (SJH) and 80 at Newbiggin on 27th (STH). A flock of 64 at Doddington on 27th was considered to be on passage (JD). Elsewhere, 17-50 were seen at Big Waters, Boulmer, Ellington, Hollin Green Farm (Keenly), Paxhill (Allenheads) and Tynemouth. One to six were noted at four further locations including birds feeding during darkness at the Royal Grammar School (Jesmond) sports field on two occasions.

**Grey Plover** *Pluvialis squatarola*

The high-tide roost at Budle Bay held 125 birds on 26th (CGK), whilst peaks elsewhere included 12 at Newbiggin on 19th (STH/IFo), ten on the R. Blyth Estuary on 14th (JL) and eight at Berwick north shore on 18th (MHu). One to three were also seen at Cocklawburn, Ladies Skerrs (Berwick) and on the R. Tweed Estuary.

**Lapwing** *Vanellus vanellus*

A big flock at Grindon Lough numbered ca.750 on 4th (PRM), ca.1,200 on 9th (SJH) and 600 on 24th (SJH). The large flock seen at Haughton Strother GP at the end of January remained, with 700 counted on 9th (MR); Caistron also held 565 on 21st (JD) and 500+ were at Earsdon on 28th (ASJ). Elsewhere, groups of 100-200, including some displaying birds, were noted at Backworth, Bothal Pond, Boulmer, East Chevington, Low Acton Farm (Allendale), Plenmeller Common, Shipley (near Alnwick) and the R. Tweed Estuary; 40-78 were also logged at Beaconhill (Cramlington), Big Waters, Bywell Haughs, Corbridge, Cresswell Pond, Hollin Green Farm (Keenly), Keepersfield (North Tyne), Melkridge and Swinhope Shield (Spartylea), with smaller counts at a further five sites.

**Ringed Plover** *Charadrius hiaticula*

The factory roof roost in Blyth harbour held 94 on 19th (LJM) and ca.40 were counted on the nearby R. Blyth Estuary on 14th (JL). A discrete flock of 32 was seen at Tealhole Point (Fenham Flats) on 9th (MH/AA) and 12-14 were present at Little Beach and North Shore in the Berwick area and at St Mary's Island. Seven were at Cocklawburn on 3rd, five at Cresswell on 18th and a single at Ladies Skerrs (Berwick) was considered uncommon in this immediate area. Returning birds at Derwent Reservoir involved two on 24th and three the next day (IFo).

**Curlew** *Numenius arquata*

Budle Bay continued to hold good numbers with 426 on 9th (SW) reducing to 320 on 27th (CGK). High tide roosts included 270 at the Long Nanny on 19th (IRD) and 178 at St Mary's Island on 10th (AJR). Counts at Druridge Pools totalled 135 on 18th (JMA) and 99 on 22nd (MSH). A total of 126 birds were seen arriving and dropping into the same patch of heather on Plenmeller Common during early evening on 28th and probably represented a communal roost (SJH). Further gatherings included 89 at Marden Farm field on 5th (MN), 76 at the R. Tweed Estuary on 19th (MHu), 72 at Cocklawburn on 3rd (MHu), 67 on Rockcliff Rugby Club pitch (Whitley Bay) on 20th (CB), 56 at Howdon on 22nd (CB), 50+ between Druridge Pool-East Chevington on 14th (JL) and 28-42 at Berwick North Shore, the Coquet Estuary, Heddon Haughs Farm (Heddon-on-the-Wall), Ladies Skerrs (Berwick) and Low Acton Farm (Allendale). 14-15 were at Grindon Lough and Prestwick Carr and single-figure reports emanated from ten further locations with 'bubbling' heard at Shankfoot Farm on 15th and the first returnee at Derwent Reservoir on 23rd.



A Curlew at St. Mary's  
by Alan Jack on 19th February



**Black-tailed Godwit** *Limosa limosa*

Two were seen in fields between Druridge Pools-East Chevington on 14th (JL) with singles logged at nearby Cresswell Pond on 3rd/19th (TRD/JD/MSH) and at Druridge Pools on 22nd (MSH). A bird was also noted on five dates at Howdon between 12th-29th and presumably remained throughout the period (CB/JGS).

**Bar-tailed Godwit** *Limosa lapponica*

The high-tide roost in Budle Bay totalled 220 on 26th (CGK) and the high-tide roost on rocks at Beadnell Haven reached 41 on 5th (EC/JSB). The R. Blyth Estuary held a peak of 16 on 19th (LJM). In the Boulmer area, ten were on the shore and eight on a nearby flooded field on 4th (JMA). One to three were also reported at Cresswell Pond (six dates), Holy Island causeway and at three sites in the Berwick area.

**Turnstone** *Arenaria interpres*

The WeBS at Berwick North Shore produced 176 on 18th (MHu). The only other count to reach double figures was 24 at St Mary's on 10th; two to five were noted from Cresswell Ices on 18th, Holy Island on 18th and at Howdon on 8th.



A Turnstone  
St. Mary's  
by Alan Jack  
11th February

**Knot** *Calidris canutus*

Counts at Fenham Flats revealed 1,140 on 9th and 810 on 21st (JDL/IBDa/KDa) and 110 roosted at high tide in Budle Bay on 26th (CGK); 64 were at Amble/R Coquet on 16th and 30 at Warkworth Gut on 3rd.

**Ruff** *Calidris pugnax*

One flew into Druridge Pools on 12th (MH), the sole record.

**Sanderling** *Calidris alba*

The highest totals were mostly in the last third of the month: 119 at Fenham Flats on 21st (IBDa/KDa), 111 at St Mary's on 28th (ASJ), 80 at Berwick on 24th (JDL) and 48 at Newbiggin on 27th; earlier around 50 were at Boulmer on 4th and 35 at Warkworth shore, also on 4th. Smaller numbers, 26 or fewer, were noted in two areas of Berwick, Cocklawburn, Cresswell, Embleton Bay and Low Newton.

**Dunlin** *Calidris alpina*

The R Blyth Estuary held 214 on 19th (LJM), around 100 in R Coquet Estuary on 4th (JMA), a peak of 82 at Tynemouth on 28th and 20-50 at Berwick, Boulmer, Cresswell Pond, Newbiggin, St Mary's and Warkworth Gut.



Two photographs from  
St. Mary's by Alan  
Jack.

Top: a Dunlin and  
right:

a Purple Sandpiper

**Purple Sandpiper** *Calidris maritima*

All the higher counts were relatively modest: about 30 at Stag Rocks on 23rd, 22 at Berwick North Shore on 18th, 20 at Craster on 25th and a peak of 14 at Tynemouth on 27th. Seven or fewer were seen at Cocklawburn, Newbiggin and St Mary's.

**Green Sandpiper** *Tringa ochropus*

Two were at Hedgeley GP on 18th (IBDa/KDa) and one there on 27th. Other singles were recorded at Horncliffe on 24th, Horndean on 4th, at Haughton Strother GP on three dates and at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 6th.



**Redshank** *Tringa totanus*

At Howdon the number increased from 314 on 12th to 342 on 26th (CB), 128 were in R Tweed Estuary on 19th and a photograph of a roost at St Mary's revealed 127 on 13th (ASJ). Elsewhere, 15-40 were reported from Berwick GC, Berwick North Shore, Boulmer, Blyth Harbour, Cocklawburn, Cresswell Pond and Lynemouth Flash and also three were at Bothal Pond on 12th. One at Derwent Reservoir on 12th (IFo) was an exceptionally early venturer so far inland.

A Redshank

Colin Bradshaw

Howdon Wetlands

**Jack Snipe** *Limnocryptes minimus*

Two were noted at Backworth throughout (CGK). One was at Newbiggin on 19th (CB/JGS) and a dog flushed one at St Mary's Wetland on 26th (SPP).

**Long-billed Dowitcher** *Limnodromus scolopaceus*

The long-staying first-winter remained all month in the Cresswell Pond area, notably 'very active and calling' on 4th (ADMc *et al.*).

**Woodcock** *Scolopax rusticola*

Apart from four at Prestwick Carr on 20th (PCF) and two on relict heath at Arcot GC on 7th (DM), all records involved singles, at Backworth, Bamburgh, Berwick, Big Waters, Howdon and Swallow Pond.

**Snipe** *Gallinago gallinago*

Counts were relatively low with 23 at Backworth on 21st (CGK) the most; 12-20 were noted at Arcot Lane flash, Branton GP, Cresswell Pond, Haughton Strother GP and near Little Waters NR. Up to seven appeared at another seven sites.

**Auk** *sp*

At Budle Point on 26th, 120 were offshore on the sea (CGK).

**Puffin** *Fratercula arctica*

One unfortunate individual was killed and eaten by a Great Black-backed Gull at Bamburgh Stag Rocks on 8th (BRS).

**Razorbill** *Alca torda*

Three to four were at Bamburgh Stag Rocks on 8th-9th (AA/MH/BRS) and one to two at Cresswell and Druridge on 18th and at Warkworth on 3rd (TRD/JD).

**Guillemot** *Uria aalge*

At Seaton Sluice, a total of 13 passed N and S in five hours' watching during the month (SSWT). Four were recorded at Berwick Meadow Haven on 9th with singles on the river at Blyth Harbour and at East Chevington (TRD/JD/STH).

**Kittiwake** *Rissa tridactyla*

One had returned to a nest at the Guildhall, Newcastle Quayside breeding site by 26th (DM) and on the coast, 57 moved N in one hour at Seaton Sluice on 23rd (SSWT); two seen at Castle Point (Holy Island) on 14th were the first signs of return to the island (IK).



**Black-headed Gull** *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

Two large roost concentrations were counted comprising 2,000 at Derwent Reservoir on 12th (IFo) and 1,100 at Budle Bay on 26th (CGK) with smaller gatherings of 150-330 at the Amble Industrial Estate, Grindon Lough, the QEII CP Lake and the River Tweed Estuary (MHu/SJH/CDH/JMA), 50-100 at Bothal Pond, Boulmer, Castle Island, Exhibition Park, Jesmond Dene, Leazes Park, Melkridge Village, Morpeth, North Shields Fish Quay, Warkworth, Wooler (JMA/DM/TD/MJCo/SJH) and up to 50 at six other localities.

**Mediterranean Gull** *Larus melanocephalus*

At the favoured Newbiggin South Bay two adults were present on 19th with 12 counted there on two days towards the end of the month (JBu/STH) and elsewhere, single birds, the majority adults, frequented East Chevington, Leazes Park, North Shields, St Mary's Island, Seaton Sluice and Swallow Pond.



Two views of  
Mediterranean Gulls in  
flight, both from  
Newbiggin

top: a summer-plumage  
bird by Jack Bucknall  
and below:

a winter-plumage adult  
by Alan Jack



**Common Gull** *Larus canus*

An impressive 5,000 were in the gull roost at Derwent Reservoir on 12th (IFo) and 1,800 were counted in the Budle Bay evening roost on 26th (CGK). At other sites were 146 at Grindon Lough (SJH), 100 at Otterburn (JMA) and up to 24 at a further six sites.



A common Gull at Ladyburn Lake by Chris Barlow

**Lesser Black-backed Gull** *Larus fuscus graelsii*

From around mid-month the first arrivals came in to join the small number of individuals which winter in the county. Records were four at Budle Bay on 26th (CGK), three at Wallsend on 29th (CGK) and singles elsewhere at Berwick, Big Waters, Cramlington, Derwent Reservoir, Exhibition Park, Grindon Lough, Jesmond Dene, the QEII CP, the River Tweed Estuary and Swallow Pond; an adult at the latter site on 20th-25th was of the race '*intermedius*' (SPP)..



A Lesser Black-backed Gull at QEII CP by Chris Barlow

**Herring Gull** *Larus argentatus argenteus*

A light but steady movement N was witnessed offshore at Holy Island on 28th (IK). In the River Tweed Estuary, 274 were seen during a WeBS on 19th (MHu), the gull roost at Budle Bay held 120 on 26th (CGK), with 200 at Yarrow and 25-100 at seven localities in the Tynemouth/Cullercoats area (JMA), Acomb, Berwick, Castle Island, Cramlington, Gosforth Park, Kielder, Leazes Park, Newcastle Town Moor, the QEII CP and Warkworth.

**\*Caspian Gull** *Larus cachinnans*

A 1st-winter was briefly on a shed roof at the North Shields Fish Quay on 16th (AC).



A second-winter Iceland Gull at QEII CP by Chris Barlow

**Iceland Gull** *Larus glaucooides*

An adult was briefly at Swallow Pond on 4th (SPP/CGK) and probably the same bird was there again on 20th (SPP) and 28th (CGK). Elsewhere, the 2nd-winter seen regularly at the QE II CP Lake was again there on 7th, 14th and 19th (CDB/STH/IFo/MSH) and, possibly the same individual, was also seen at the NS Fish Quay on 7th (DRW). On 10th, an un-aged bird was seen briefly, flying S at Tynemouth (SPP).

**Glaucous Gull** *Larus hyperboreus*

An unusual, inland record was an un-aged bird at Branton GP on 27th (IBDa/KDa).

**Great Black-backed Gull** *Larus marinus*

At Old Water (Warkworth), 15 were recorded on 4th (JMA) and inland at Grindon Lough up to five were present on a number of dates (SJH/PRM) with four also in the River Tweed Estuary during a WeBS on 19th (MHu). One to two were at five other, mainly coastal, sites.

**Stock Dove** *Columba oenas*

58 were at Howdon on 20th (CB), 35 at Houghton Strother GP on 9th (MR), and 12-15 at Big Waters (GB) and Carrshield (EC/JSB). One to six were at 13 other widespread localities.

**Woodpigeon** *Columba palumbus*

Around 1,000 were at Warkworth on 4th (IK/ASH), 600 at Close House on 15th (MH), 500 at High Newton on 7th (CB/JGS) and Houghton Strother GP on 9th (MR), and 100 at East Cramlington LNR (STH). Two to 25 were at other places.

**Barn Owl** *Tyto alba*

Well reported from 32 different locations but all single birds with Cresswell Pond, Druridge and East Chevington featuring most often.

**Little Owl** *Athene noctua*

Heard regularly throughout the month at Shiremoor (CGK/GPK), with singles at Derwent Reservoir on three dates from 10th (IFo), Harlow Hill on 15th (ALT) and Backworth on 16th (ASJ).

**Tawny Owl** *Strix aluco*

Just three reports. Two pairs called at Bolam Lake on 28th (CDB), a pair were at a nestbox in Stamfordham all month (EC), and one called at central Alnwick on 19th (JMA).

**Long-eared Owl** *Asio otus*

One roosted in dunes at Holy Island on 5th (IK), one was last noted at a North Tyneside roost on 21st (CGK/GPK), and one called at Bolam Lake on 28th (CDB).

**Short-eared Owl** *Asio flammeus*

Two at Prestwick Carr on 15th and singles there on two other dates (PCF), two at Plenmeller Common on 28th (SJH), and singles at Berwick, Druridge Pools, Newbiggin, St Mary's Wetland, West Chevington and Woodhorn Flashes.



**Kingfisher** *Alcedo atthis*

Two were at Jesmond Dene on 21st (MJCo), and singles regularly at Swallow Pond until 10th and Beggar's Rigg (Rothbury) on 11th, Thrum Mill (Rothbury) on 14th, Howick on 15th, Horncliffe on 19th, Cresswell Pond on 20th, Horton Burn (Cramlington) on 23rd and Blyth Harbour on 24th.

**Green Woodpecker** *Picus viridis*

Single birds at Shilla Hill on 2nd (SW), Killingworth Lake on 7th (PRM), Close House (Wylam) on 14th (AA), Tyne Riverside (Newburn) on 21st (PCF), and Swallowship Wood (Hexham) on 25th.

**Great Spotted Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos major*

Three the high count at Arcot Pond on 21st and Kirkley Hall on 29th (LJM/IK) with two at Jesmond Dene on 7th, Tynemouth on 14th, Gosforth Park on 19th, Big Waters on 21st, Valley Park, Cramlington on 13th and Warkworth on 26th. Singles were at six other locations.

**Ring-necked Parakeet** *Psittacula krameri*

Four flew over Shieldfield (Newcastle) on 15th (MJ).

**Kestrel** *Falco tinninculus*

At East Woodburn three birds were present on 11th (PCF) and two birds were at St Mary's Island on 1st and throughout the month (ASJ) and two were at Hebron (Morpeth) on 14th (TB). Single birds were at 19 sites during the month.

**Merlin** *Falco columbarius*

Unsexed birds were at East Chevington on 15th (TF/JFa) and at Lindisfarne NNR on 21st (IBDa/KDa). A male was at Low Newton on 25th (TD) and a female was noted nr Keenley on 28th (SJH).

**Peregrine** *Falco peregrinus*

Two adult birds flew SW near Harwood on 23rd (MH/AA) and single birds including a female back at a nest site on 21st (EC) and other single birds were at East Chevington, Fenham Flats Horncliffe, Humshaugh, Tynemouth and at a confidential site.

**Great Grey Shrike** *Lanius excubitor*

One was near Redpath Farm in Harwood Forest on 11th (ADMc).

**Magpie** *Pica pica*

Eight were at Jesmond Dene on 7th (MJCo), two visited an Old Hartley Garden during the month, and two renovated a nest at High Heaton on 20th.

**Jay** *Garrulus glandarius*

Four at Gosforth Park NR on 13th (KWY), two at Ellington on 13th (TB), and singles at eight further widespread localities.

**Jackdaw** *Corvus monedula*

A pre-roost gathering of 500+ was at Red House Farm on 19th (PCF), 300 were at Warkworth on 4th (JMA), 250 at Alnwick on 19th (JMA), 120 at Seaton Burn on 4th (DM), 100 at Cramlington and Shipley, 25-50 at Capheaton and QEII CP, and one to three in an Old Hartley garden and Jesmond Dene.

**Rook** *Corvus frugilegus*

300 were at Warkworth on 4th (JMA), 100 at Amble, Falstone and Shipley (JMA), 50 at Tasset, and 11-20 at Alnwick and QEII CP. One visited an Old Hartley garden on 28th (RJP).

**Carrion Crow** *Corvus corone*

24 were at North Shields on 2nd (JMA) and 24 gathered pre-roost at Prestwick Carr on 26th (PCF), 13 were at Newbiggin on 27th (STH), and three to seven at Bolam Lake and Jesmond Dene.

**Hooded Crow** *Corvus corone cornix*

One was with Carrion Crows at Chatton on 21st (DF/NNBC).

**Raven** *Corvus corax*

Two calling flew N over Mootlaw Quarry on 3rd (AT), two were at The Cheviot on 12th (IRD), and two at Old Bewick on 22nd (MH). Singles were at Breamish Valley on 1st and Grindon Lough on 14th.

**Goldcrest** *Regulus regulus*

Two were at Newcastle Exhibition Park and Jesmond Dene on 28th (GB/MJCo), and singles at Howdon and Newcastle Quayside.

**Blue Tit** *Cyanistes caeruleus*

Up to ten were found at Holywell Dene and up to six in an Old Hartley garden (RJP) with four in Jesmond Dene on 21st.

**Great Tit** *Parus major*

Peak counts of eight at Bolam Lake on 15th (CDB), Cramlington on 27th (DM) and Prestwick Carr on 21st (PCF), and four at Holywell Dene, Jesmond Dene and Old Hartley.

**Coal Tit** *Periparus ater*

One to three were at Old Hartley, Holywell Dene, Howdon, and Jesmond Dene.

**Willow Tit** *Poecile montanus*

At Prestwick Carr three were present on 23rd with two regularly there and at Backworth (PCF/CGK/GPK). Two were also at Beggar's Rigg (Rothbury) on 4th, Twizell (near Ogle) on 17th (MJC) and Backworth Pond on 21st (AC). Singles were at six other locations.

**Marsh Tit** *Poecile palustris*

Two at the Old Railway Line (Rothbury) on 21st (JD) and Warkworth on 26th (MJC) with singles at six other locations being noted singing at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on two dates.

**Skylark** *Alauda arvensis*

An AONB survey at Goswick Farm found 31 on 22nd with around 30 in game strip cover by Warkworth GC on 16th (BWG). A walk from Druridge Pools to East Chevington found 12 singing birds on 12th (MH), ten were with Curlew at Low Acton Farm (Allendale) on 28th (SJH) with one to five singing at 12 widely spread localities.

**Long-tailed Tit** *Aegithalos caudatus*

A flock of 17 were gathered together on a single long feeder at East Chevington on 2nd (MH/AA). Prestwick Carr held 12 on 11th (PCF), 11 were near Humshaugh on 19th and ten at Seton Hall (Tweedmouth) on 27th. An Old Hartley garden attracted two to nine on various dates, while five to six were noted at Cramlington (Southfield Green), Gosforth Park NR, Jesmond Dene, Tynemouth and Wark (North Tyne). Elsewhere one to four were reported from a further twelve localities.

Top: a Long-tailed Tit at  
Wallington NT by Jack  
Bucknall

Below: a Nuthatch at an  
East Chevington feeder  
by Alan Younger

**Chiffchaff** *Phylloscopus collybita*

Singles were at Gosforth Park NR on 13th (KWY) and in a Fulbeck (Morpeth) garden on 14th (TD).

**Blackcap** *Sylvia atricapilla*

A South Gosforth garden held a male regularly from mid-month to 29th, when two males were present (MJCo). A male and female were in an Alnwick garden on 16th (JMA) and a single bird was at Lowick on 10th (NNBC).

**Waxwing** *Bombus garrulous*

A single bird was at Widdrington from 13th-16th (TB/TF/JFa/IRB/CDB).

**Nuthatch** *Sitta europaea*

Three were at Gosforth Park NR on 13th, at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 14th and at Jesmond Dene on 21st. There were reports of two from Holywell Dene and Kirkley Hall, while singles were at Derwent Reservoir, Hexham and Rothbury. More unusual was a single at Leazes Park on 1st, this being the observer's first sighting here in 26 years (DM). Another single at Tynemouth was the first here in more than five years (CB).





**Treecreeper** *Certhia familiaris*

A pair and another single were noted at Kirkley Hall on 29th (IK). Two were reported from Derwent Reservoir, Gosforth Park NR, Jesmond Dene and Prestwick Carr and singles at Bolam Lake, Budle Bay, Cramlington, Holywell Dene, Rothbury and Tweedmouth.

**Wren** *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Two to three were noted at Bolam Lake, Gosforth Park NR, Holywell Dene and Jesmond Dene.

**Starling** *Sturnus vulgaris*

Some large roosts were reported from the south-west of the county, most notably at Whitchester (Haltwhistle), where numbers rose from 4,000 on 23rd to 5,000 on 24th and 6,000 by 28th. At nearby Melkridge numbers fluctuated between 2,300 and 3,000 from 12th-18th before declining to 1,100 on 22nd, 600 on 23rd and 200 on 25th. At a third site 1,000 were reported from a reedbed at Lambley Minewater Treatment Works on 6th, with 350 there on 8th (all SJH). Elsewhere 1,000 were noted at Fawdon on 19th (PCF), 500 at Chibburn (Widdrington) on 18th and at Prestwick Carr on 12th, 250 at Big Waters on 28th, 200 at Grindon Lough on 9th and 100 at Plenmeller Common on 28th. Flocks of 25-80 were reported from a further six localities.

**Dipper** *Cinclus cinclus*

Four pairs held territory in the Happy Valley/Carey Burn area by 28th (MJC). Two pairs were at regular sites in Jesmond Dene during the month and four were noted at Beggar's Rigg (Rothbury) on 11th. A pair visited a potential breeding site at Medburn on 3rd and two were at Coupland on 27th. Singles were also noted at Holywell Dene and Wark (North Tyne).



A Dipper at Rothbury on 11th February by Mike Carr

**Blackbird** *Turdus merula*

12 at Howdon on 18th was the largest gathering (CB). Up to five were noted at Holywell Dene throughout the month, four were at Bolam Lake and two at Jesmond Dene.

**Fieldfare** *Turdus pilaris*

A large gathering of 1,000 was at Doddington on 4th (TRD/JD). Other sizeable flocks were 270 at Shadfen on 15th, 200 at Druridge on 16th, Ingoe on 29th, and Wark (North Tyne) on 6th, while 150 were at Widdrington Lane on 18th, 140 at North Charlton on 16th and 100 at Kirkley Hall on 29th. Elsewhere, 64 were at West Ord (Berwick), 50 at Dunstan and Prestwick Carr and 40-45 at Ealingham Rigg and Eshott, with lesser numbers of ten to 25 reported from a further six localities.

**Song Thrush** *Turdus philomelos*

Five were at Prestwick Carr on 14th (PCF) and singles at four localities in Jesmond Dene on 21st. Three were in song at Arcot Pond / Lane on 28th, singing commenced at Fulbeck (Morpeth) from 20th and further singles were at Howdon and Low Cocklaw (Berwick).



**Redwing** *Turdus iliacus*

Flocks of 80 were at Ealingham Rigg on 14th and at Shadfen on 15th (PRM/TF/JFa); 50+ were at Druridge on 16th and 50 at Wark on 6th, while 30 were noted at Backworth and Cramlington (Beaconhill and Shankhouse). Further smaller gatherings included 20-25 at Jesmond, Prestwick Carr, Swallow Pond and West Howdon with one to 17 at five other localities.

**Mistle Thrush** *Turdus viscivorus*

The species was well reported this month, with counts of 11 from Derwent Reservoir on 15th (IFo) and RGS (Jesmond) on 22nd (GB). Seven flew over Fulbeck (Morpeth) on 21st; four were at Swallowship (Hexham) on 25th and three at Jesmond Dene on 28th. One to two were also noted at Drift Inn (Cresswell), Ellington, Howdon, Killingworth Lake, Prestwick Carr, Spartylea and Wark (North Tyne).

**Robin** *Erithacus rubecula*

There were six at Bolam Lake on 15th (CDB) and one to three at Gosforth Garden Village, Holywell Dene and Jesmond Dene.

**Black Redstart** *Phoenicurus ochruros*

The bird reported from Tynemouth in January was present throughout the month (AJ/KWY/SPP).

The popular Black Redstart at Tynemouth on 29th February by Alan Jack

**Stonechat** *Saxicola rubicola*

Peak counts during the month were six at Cresswell Pond on 12th (SPP) and a total of six (four males) between Druridge Pools and East Chevington, also on 12th (MH). Pairs were noted at Berwick on 25th, Cocklawburn on 12th, St Mary's Island on 26th and Warkworth on 4th, with singles at the Drift Inn (Cresswell) on 10th, Hauxley, on 3rd and Stag Rocks on 9th

**Dunnock** *Prunella modularis*

Ten+ were noted at Fenham le Moor on 24th and at Holywell Dene on 16th (MHS/ASJ). Two in Jesmond Dene was the only other report.

January Bulletin The aberrant Dunnock picture in the January Bulletin was captioned Peter Tatchell not Peter Tapsell.

The gay rights activist has not moved to Morpeth.



Mike Carr gets up close to a Dunnock at Buston on 18th February



**House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus*

30-35 attended garden feeders at Marden Estate all month (ASJ). Similar numbers were noted during the month at Forest Hall, Cullercoats and Monkseaton (ASJ). 20 were at Cramlington at Southfield Green (DM). 12 at Alnwick Garden on 11th (JMA). Nine in a Chapel House Estate garden on 26th (MH). Two at Jesmond Dene and Tynemouth during the month.

**Tree Sparrow** *Passer montanus*

20+ at Fenham le Moor on 24th (MHS). 14 at feeders at Holywell and 13 at Linden Hall on 20th (ASJ/NFo). Eight in Holywell Dene on 17th and three on garden feeders in Tynemouth on 15th. One to five were at six further sites.

**Grey Wagtail** *Motacilla cinerea*

Four at Jesmond Dene on 7th (MJCo). Singles at 13 further sites including Exhibition Park (Newcastle).

**Pied Wagtail** *Motacilla alba*

12 in sheep fields at Shipley (Alnwick ) remained from last month (MH). Eight were feeding on tide wrack at St Mary's on several dates (ASJ). The only other reports were of three at Beaconhill (Cramlington) on 18th and two at Grindon on 9th with a single at Arcot Pond on 7th.

**Meadow Pipit** *Anthus pratensis*

35 at Backworth on 6th and 26 at Goswick Farm on 22nd were the month's largest counts (CGK/BWG). On the latter date, 12 were also in fields at St. Mary's (ASJ). By 27th eight birds had returned to the Chare Ends area of Holy Island (IK). Five were at Beacon Hill (Cramlington) on 9th and three noted at Big Waters on 28th (STH/GB). Two were notable inland at Derwent Reservoir on 11th (NFo) with singles at Arcot and Big Waters on 14th.

**Rock Pipit** *Anthus petrosus*

Eight feeding among seaweed at St Mary's on 26th was the peak count this month, with six noted doing same at Low Newton on 5th (ASJ/EC/JSB). Four at Tynemouth and at Rockcliffe,Whitley Bay on many dates, with song-flight noted (ASJ) and a single at Blyth Harbour on 24th (STH).

**Brambling** *Fringilla montifringilla*

30+ were in stubble at Knowesgate on 11th (PCF). The regular wintering site of Wallington attracted six birds to the feeders on 28th (JBu). Two visited a Corbridge garden on 9th (MR). Singles were at Yearle and Humshaugh during the month.

Top: a Rock Pipit at Tynemouth on 18th February  
by Alan Jack and below: a Brambling at  
Wallington NT by Jack Bucknall





**Chaffinch** *Fringilla coelebs*

150 were found at Bradford Kaims in a set-aside field on 9th (MH/AA). 40+ at Knowesgate with Brambling on 11th (PCF). 22 were at Whitelea Horse Paddocks (Cramlington) on 28th (DM). Elsewhere, one to eight were at six further sites.

**Bullfinch** *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

12 were at Beggar's Rigg (Rothbury) on 11th (MJC). A peak of eight at an Old Hartley garden during the month, with five in nearby Holywell Dene (RJP). Five also in a Rothbury garden on several dates. Elsewhere, one to five were seen at 16 other sites.

A Cock Bullfinch at Rothbury  
11th February by Mike Carr

**Greenfinch** *Chloris chloris*

Ten at Ellington on 7th was the largest group reported in the month (TB). Poorly observed this month, one to three at only four other locations.

**Linnet** *Carduelis cannabina*

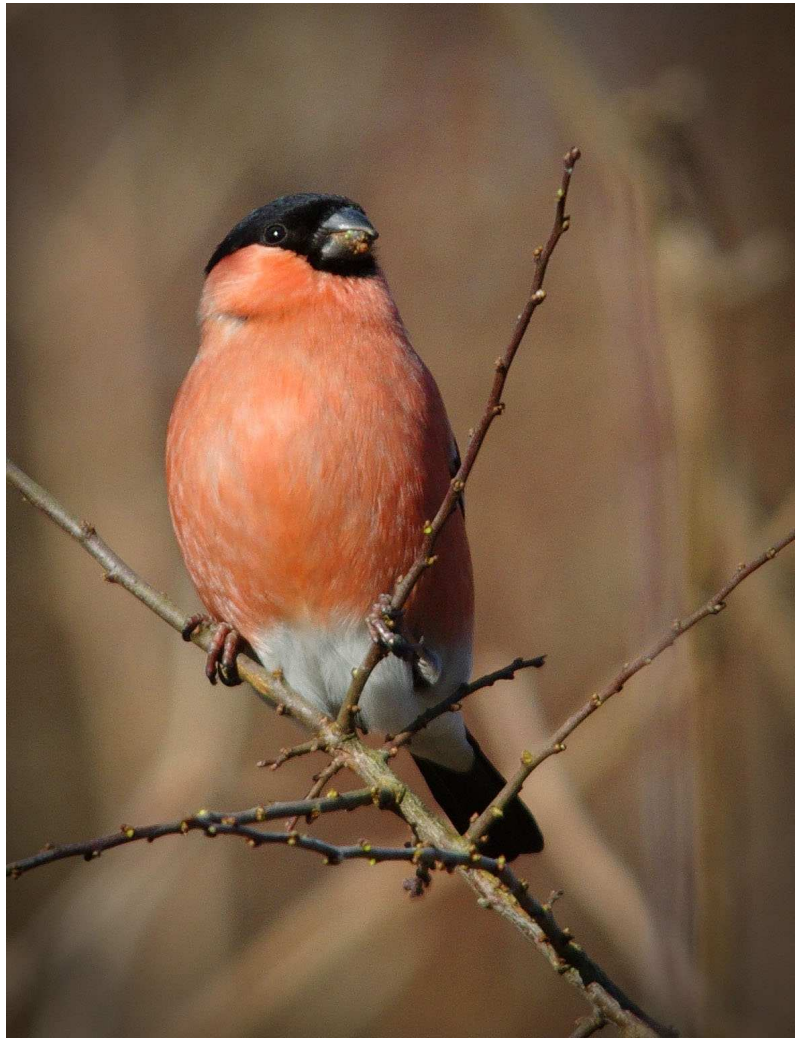
A Goswick Farm flock on 22nd contained 80 birds, whilst 70 were noted at Bradford Kaims on 9th (BWG/MH/AA). Groups of 40 were at Big Waters and Bamburgh on 6th and 8th (GB/SW). Birds were beginning to sing on mild days along waggonways at Holywell in the last week of February (ASJ).

**Twite** *Carduelis flavirostris*

40 - 50 at Hemscott Hill dunes on 12th (SPP) and 20th (TD). 30+ at Fenham le Moor on 24th (MHS). 12 birds were seen at Spittal (Berwick) on 20th (BWG/MHu). Eight at East Chevington on 13th and three at Fenham Flats on 9th were the month's other reports.

**Lesser Redpoll** *Carduelis cabaret*

Around 27 were at Heddon on the Wall on 15th(MH). 20+ at Toft Hill on 21st (JL). One to 15 were at ten further sites, including two in Gosforth Garden Village.



A Lesser Redpoll at Bolam by Chris Barlow



**Common(Mealy) Redpoll** *Carduelis Flammea*

One seen at Birling Carrs on 3rd with a maximum of six present on 16th (NNBC/EC/JSB).

**Arctic Redpoll** *Carduelis hornemanni/exilipes*

The wintering individual was again seen on 3rd/4th at Birling Carrs (NNBC).

**Crossbill** *Loxia curvirostris*

12 were at Carey Burn on 2th (MJC) and 8+ flew S over East Cramlington on 18th (STH). Near the coast, seven (two males) were in trees near Whitley Bay Golf Course on 26th (ASJ). Six were noted at Shilla Hill (Bellingham) on 3rd(SW). Two pairs were at Hepburn Woods on 25th (EHa), with two birds at Haughton Strother and Widehope on 2nd and a single at Blakehopeburnhaugh on 1st.

**Goldfinch** *Carduelis carduelis*

A large flock of 134 was counted at East Ord (Berwick) on 5th (BWG). 36 at Prestwick Carr on 27th (PCF). 24 were in a Corbridge garden on 9th (MR) and 24 at Prestwick Carr on 26th (PCF). Flocks of 25 were at Percy Main, Capheaton and St Mary's in the first week of the month (JMA/ASJ). 20 at Beacon Lane (Cramlington) on 21st (DM). Elsewhere in Cramlington, 16 at Valley Park and 14 at Barns Park in the month. One to eight were attracted to garden feeders in Alnwick and Marden Estate, and five seen at Wark on 11th (JMA/ASJ/PRM).

**Siskin** *Carduelis spinus*

Small numbers reported during the month, with eight at Gosforth Park, seven at Howdon, five at Backworth and at feeders in a South Gosforth garden all month. One to four were at seven further sites, including two birds at Gosforth Garden village.

**Snow Bunting** *Plectrophenax nivalis*

13 in flight at Ross Back Sands on 7th (JL). 12 feeding on wind-blown seeds on road at Cottonshope (Kielder) were the only sightings.

**Yellowhammer** *Emberiza citrinella*

Up to 30 were dropping from hedges to feed in stubble at Backworth on several dates (ASJ). 20 continued to visit a Corbridge garden during the month (MR). 18 at Fishwick Mains on 4th (BWG). Eight were at Cresswell Farm on 9th and six at Whitelea Paddocks (Cramlington). One to three at four other locations.

**Reed Bunting** *Emberiza schoeniclus*

The mixed feeding flock from last month remained with 21 with Yellowhammers at Backworth on several dates (ASJ). Six were at Cresswell Pond on 19th and four noted at Howdon on 26th (STh/IFo/CB). One to two were at five further sites including inland at Derwent Reservoir and at Grindon.

**ESCAPES, HYBRIDS AND BIRDS OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN****Hybrids****Canada Goose x Greylag Goose** *Branta canadensis x Anser anser*

One was present at Bothal Pond on 14th (TF /JFa).

**Aythya hybrid** *Aythya sp*

The putative hybrid seen at Howdon Wetland last month was still present at least until 8th (CB). Single drakes were also noted at Killingworth Lake on 27th (GB) and at Tynemouth on 6th (DRW). A female type was also noted at Killingworth on 29th (CB / JGS). All of these birds were thought likely to be Tufted Duck x Pochard.

An *Aythya* hybrid at  
Tynemouth Boating  
Lake on 6th February by  
Duncan Watson





A Howdon Wetland aythya hybrid by Colin Bradshaw

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Bamburgh Ringing Society, Berwick Wildlife Group, Natural History Society of Northumbria, North Northumberland Bird Club, Seaton Sluice Watch Tower.

#### Apologies for any accidental omissions

#### BULLETIN COMPILATION AND PRODUCTION

This bulletin was compiled by Graeme Bowman (Mute Swan to Ruddy Duck), Steve Laing (Red Grouse to Black-necked Grebe), Trevor Blake (Honey-buzzard to Crane), Steve Holliday (Avocet to Godwit), Ian Forsyth (Turnstone to Skua), Eddie Crabtree (Puffin to Great Black-backed Gull), Tim Dean (Escapes, Hybrids and Unknown Origin, List of Contributors, Highlights), Peter Fletcher (Feral Pigeon to Red-rumped Swallow), Mike Richardson (Cetti's Warbler to Pied Flycatcher), Alan Jack (Dunnet to Corn Bunting), Kathy Evans (WeBS Coastal Counts) and Steve Holliday (WeBS Inland Counts).

Thanks to David Sanders of NNBC for providing data.

Proof reading was by Mike Smith. Mail distribution by Paul Stewart.

Edited by Steve Barrett [NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com](mailto:NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com)

#### RECORD SUBMISSION

Please email [ntbcorg@gmail.com](mailto:ntbcorg@gmail.com) for a copy of the standard spreadsheet and other details.

Location names and grid references: The use of standard location names and the include grid references as this greatly increases the value of records in subsequent analyses. A 1km square grid reference is the ideal e.g. NY8067 for Grindon Lough, but 2km square references (tetrads) are also acceptable e.g. NY86D in this case. A list of localities and their tetrad grid references (tetrad/Locality List) can be downloaded from the 'Resources & Downloads' section of the Club website at <http://www.ntbc.org.uk> – the use of these names, wherever possible, would be highly appreciated.

Could club members ensure they to submit records direct to NTBC rather than just Birdtrack. There may be an assumption by some members this happens automatically. We do not want to miss records.



## PHOTOGRAPHS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Please keep submitting your articles, photographs, sketches and illustrations for the bulletin. Thanks again to those who have supplied the excellent photographs. Please send to Steve Barrett at [NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com](mailto:NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com)

It is preferable if you re-size your photos before sending and a suggested size is 640 x 480 pixels. Please ensure you include the following information with your submissions: name, species, date taken, locality.

Photographs will not be used elsewhere without the photographer's permission.

## MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Annual membership costs £10 for a junior, £30 for an individual, and £32 for a family.

For membership enquiries please contact [ntbc@jobentley.plus.com](mailto:ntbc@jobentley.plus.com)

Membership subscriptions were due at the beginning of October. If you internet bank you can pay online: please include your name in the ref. It is helpful if you email me to let me know when you've made the transfer [ntbc@jobentley.plus.com](mailto:ntbc@jobentley.plus.com)

If you decide to set up a standing order please date the first payment at least a fortnight from your posting date to allow time to process with the bank. You can also set up your standing order directly with your bank if you wish; just let me know.

Finally, if you know anyone who might like to join NTBC please pass on the club information - new members are always welcome.

**Jo Bentley - Hon Treasurer**

## NTBC WEB SITE

The Club website is an excellent resource for all interested in birds in the north-east. There are numerous interesting sections, including a photograph gallery, site information and trip reports together with extensive reference information for birding in our area. Please submit any new content for the website to the main club email address.

## NTBC SIGHTINGS PAGE

The Sightings Page contains current reports by members. Access is from the NTBC website and an email notification is available for new postings. Members need to submit a request to be added to the website, specifying the email address they wish to post from before they can submit sightings to [ntbcorg@gmail.com](mailto:ntbcorg@gmail.com)

## BIRDS IN NORTHUMBRIA 2015 - a request for photographs.

Photos are always welcome for consideration. All members are free to submit images (taken within the county during 2015) to the editor. Please send as jpeg image attachments to one or more emails, or copy to a disc and send to the address below. Larger files are preferred.

Andy Mould, 10 Fairfield, Longbenton, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE12 8UF.

Email: [highroller10@btinternet.com](mailto:highroller10@btinternet.com)



A reminder of the snow last winter - a Robin at Bolam Lake by Chris Barlow

COASTAL WeBS COUNTS: NORTHUMBERLAND										PF	P. Fletcher	MLC	M. L. Cadwallender/ W. Dickson	TAC	T. A. Cadwallender	MGA	M. G. Anderson							
December	2015					KAE K. A. Evans	TB T. Brewis					JAR J. Roper/W. Banks	MK M. Kerby				RC R. Chilton							
						KR K. Redgrave/ K. Bradshaw	AC A. Craggs					AB A. Brunt	DMT D. M. Turner				LJM L. J. McDougall							
							MHu M. Hutcheson										KVB K. Brooks							
Site	TOTAL	Berwick North Shore (including Little Beach)	Berwick Little Beach	Tweed Estuary	Tweed: A1 By-Pass to Gainslaw House	Splital - Cocklawburn	Lindisfarne NNR (including Budle Bay)	Budle Pt - Seahouses	Seahouses - Beadnell	Beadnell - Howick	Howick - Boulmer	Boulmer - Alnmouth	Aln Estuary		Cresswell - Newbiggin	Newbiggin - Cambois	Blyth Estuary	Blyth Estuary - Seaton Sluice	St Mary's Island	Whitley Bay - Tynemouth	Tyne North Pier - Fish Quay	East Howdon, (north bank only)	Redheugh - Scotswood Bridge, (north bank)	Scotswood - Newbig- gin Bridge
Counter		MHu	MHu	MHu	TB	MHu	AC	AC	KAE	MLC	KR	JAR	AB	TAC	MGA	RC	LJM	KVB	SP	MK	DMT	DMT	PF	PF
Date		9		11	14	14	13	13	12	9	14	14	28		13	13	12	21	13	20	27	28	13	13
Red-throated Diver	15						5		3		3						1	2	1					
Great Northern Diver	2						1		1															
Black-throated Diver	1								1															
Little Grebe	7				1		1				1			4										
Slavonian Grebe	3						3																	
Cormorant	271	22		8	8	10	18		8	7	7	4	2	6		4	60	2	22	12	50	16	5	
Shag	39	6		2		7	3		11		8								2					
Grey Heron	59	1		13	3	1	8		8		4	6		1	4	1	1		6				2	
Mute Swan	53			42	5		3	1				1												2
Pink-footed Goose	5			1			4																	
Greylag Goose	388			45			341	340						2										
Canada Goose	152			9			1	1						142										
Barnacle Goose	400						400	400																
Dark-bellied Brent Goose	70						70																	
Light-bellied Brent Goose	1,461						1461	120																
Shelduck	2,217						2201	210														16		
Wigeon	1,614					2	928	750			95	60	175	354										
Teal	866				69		282	250						208			57		26			37	119	68
Mallard	968			158	84	52	322	200		6	36	79	35	98			36		17				29	16
Pintail	158				1		157																	
Shoveler	11						11																	
Tufted Duck	16					10	5												1					
Eider	891	1		10		22	532	15	61	100	27	18	21	1		5	45	34	8	5	1			
Long-tailed Duck	10						9		1															
Common Scoter	64					7			25									32						
Goldeneye	103			56	29		9			1	6						2							
Red-breasted Merganser	45			2			31		7	1	3						1							
Goosander	41			3	35									2										1
Moorhen	18						2			1				12					3					
Coot	5						2												3					
Oystercatcher	2,726	153		25	5	36	1372	250	87	86	234	107	95	48	49	33	27	41	151	138	39			
Ringed Plover	333						59		33	8	22	5			34	9	47	90	21	5				
Golden Plover	3,910						1088					500	260		62				2000					
Grey Plover	569	9					461	180		13	1	3	67	12	3									
Lapwing	1,694			160			385	40	39		50	295	107	186			7		403			59		3
Knot	1,406						1378					10						17	1					
Sanderling	204	6		26			58		4	3	27	12			7	10		17	32	2				
Purple Sandpiper	99	4						80	47	12	12				2			3	4	15				
Dunlin	1,785	5					1442			4		69	72		56		77		25	2		33		
Snipe	28						8												20					
Bar-tailed Godwit	889						859	200		8		6	15				1							
Curlew	2,738	42		46		29	1547	350	4	60	6	274	65	381	6	1	25		202	38	1	3	7	1
Redshank	1,758	6		83	2	4	747	200	15	28	30	106	49	118	55	12	41	43	154	91	5	145	11	13
Turnstone	756	43		8			130		95	145	53	32	40		25		4	18	80	77	6			
Little Gull	0																							
Black-headed Gull	3,596	54		874	17	34	259	70	20	129	267	252		210			143			66	279	595	306	91
Common Gull	978	6		48	13	6	795		4	2	70			16								6	6	6
Lesser Black-backed Gull	1						1																	
Herring Gull	1,939	56		680	1	32	41	40	54	85	353	109		16			126			90	79	82	104	31
Great Black-backed Gull	446	3		31	1	5	12	9	5	33	116			6			25			82	79	40	8	
Glaucous Gull	1																			1				
Mediterranean Gull	1																		1					
Kingfisher	1													1										
ADDITIONAL SPECIES																								
Little Egret	7						6										1							
Guillemot	3																			3				
TOTALS - WILDFOWL	9,953	30	0	349	235	111	6,810	2,287	126	116	189	169	233	830	4	10	202	69	90	18	51	69	155	87
- WADERS	18,895	268	0	348	7	69	9,534	1,300	324	367	435	1,419	770	745	299	65	229	229	3,093	368	51	240	18	17
- GULLS & TERNS	6,962	119	0	1,633	32	77	1,108	119	83	249	806	361	0	248	0	0	294	0	1	239	437	723	424	128



COASTAL WeBS COUNTS: NORTHUMBERLAND

		COASTAL WEBS COUNTS: NORTHUMBERLAND										KE		K. Evans		MLC		M. L. Cadwallender		TAC		T. A. Cadwallender		MGA		M. G. Anderson	
												TB		T. Brewis		KR		K. Redgrave/K. Bradshaw		PF		P. Fletcher		DMT		D. M. Turner	
January	2016											AC		A. Craggs		JAR		J. A. Roper		TW		T. Watson		LMC		L. J. McDougall	
		MHu M. Hutcheson										AB		A. Brunt		MK		M. Kerby		KVB		K. Brooks					
Site	TOTAL	Berwick North Shore (including Little Beach)	Tweed Estuary	Tweed: A1 By-Pass to Gainslaw House	Spittal - Cocklawburn	Lindisfarne NNR (including Budle Bay)	Budle Pt - Seahouses	Seahouses - Beadnell	Beadnell - Howick	Howick - Boulmer	Boulmer - Alnmouth	Aln Estuary	Amble - Chevington	Cresswell - Newbiggin	Newbiggin - Cambois	Blyth Estuary	Blyth Estuary - Seaton Sluice	Whitley Bay - Tynemouth	Tyne North Pier - Fish Quay	East Howdon, (north bank only)	Redhugh - Scotswood Bridge, (north bank)	Scotswood - Newburn Bridge, (north bank)					
Counter		MHu	MHu	TB	MHu	AC	AC	KE	MLC	KR	JAR	AB	TAC	TW	MGA	RC	LJM	KVB	MK	DMT	DMT	PF	PF				
Date		15	13	13	18	17	17	17	20	14/18	18	20	17	16	16		17	21	17	24	25	17	17				
Red-throated Diver	11	2			2					2		2						3									
Little Grebe	6		1										5														
Great Crested Grebe	2											2															
Slavonian Grebe	22					20		2																			
Cormorant	140	15	8	3	5	30		7	12	2	2	3				11	4	4	25	3	4	2					
Shag	25	4	3		3	8	6	3		4																	
Grey Heron	63	4	11	4	3	6		4	5		7	6	5	3	3		1		1								
Mute Swan	77		52	8		14				2												1					
Whooper Swan	31			3		28																					
Pink-footed Goose	421		1			420																					
Greylag Goose	7				5								2														
Canada Goose	89		34											55													
Barnacle Goose	6					5							1														
Dark-bellied Brent Goose	5					5																					
Light-bellied Brent Goose	683					682	360					1															
Shelduck	1,648					1608	270				3	2	7			5				21	2						
Wigeon	1,749					1255	650		130		40	6	316			2											
Gadwall	35															33				2							
Teal	994			66	1	265	210			5			249			80				37	183	108					
Mallard	1,006	3	196	70	38	382	170		6	8	58	51	92			57				5	30	10					
Pintail	254		1			253																					
Shoveler	7					7																					
Tufted Duck	39				4	5														30							
Scaup	1																			1							
Eider	846	28	4		6	475	15	82	57	42	31	51		32		25	5	6	2								
Long-tailed Duck	35					28		7																			
Common Scoter	57				4			53																			
Goldeneye	243	46	132	15		10			11	11	1	5	1			11											
Red-breasted Merganser	38	2	2			9			2	10		4	4			5											
Goosander	31		22	9																							
Moorhen	9					3							4			2											
Coot	3					2														1							
Oystercatcher	1,681	86	32	10	84	396	70	74	128	259	90	113	2	116	104		14	31	96	46							
Ringed Plover	235	34			12	39				4	3	11		13	68		38	2	7	4							
Golden Plover	1,593				52	1183				38		240			2		30		44	4							
Grey Plover	268	7				175			23	5	1	42	2	1	4		8										
Lapwing	597		48		36	207	150		6		29	180	4			27				59		1					
Knot	329					300			2		1				9		17										
Sanderling	583	42				17			14	22	18	212		109	96		4	36	13								
Purple Sandpiper	364							196	111	3		10		21	6		9	8									
Dunlin	2,143	16			4	1296	50		1		32	77		14	314	365		1	1		22						
Snipe	5					4				1																	
Bar-tailed Godwit	1,199	5	1			1107	90	4	27	6		37		5			7										
Curlew	1,536	7	12		66	553	60		209	23	192	253	81	6	11		41	1	1	2	3	13	62				
Redshank	1,746	48	114	11	5	641	142	9	21	42	143	140	73	69	93		72	36	49	13	151	10	6				
Turnstone	429	24	46		1	50		74		47	50	41		23	23		19	8	22	1							
Black-headed Gull	2,754	52	456	11	18	287	80	76	14	160	42		78	275		161		226	184	235	443	36					
Common Gull	414	28	34		2	177	30	14		60			16	56		9		7			5	6					
Herring Gull	1,363	62	264		14	74	40	87	62	130	125		12	37		116		95	76	33	140	36					
Great Black-backed Gull	181	4	8		1	19	15	6	8	25	2		5	10		6		36	30		6	15					
ADDITIONAL SPECIES																											
Guillemot	24	2			8				1	10								3									
Razorbill	1																	1									
Fulmar	51		1							50																	
Little Egret	5					3			2																		
Woodcock	1											1															
White-fronted Goose	16			16																							
TOTALS - WILDFOWL	8,583	104	467	178	71	5,520	1,681	158	223	86	142	133	741	35	3	0	232	9	14	27	100	219	121				
- WADERS	12,708	269	253	21	260	5,968	562	357	542	450	559	1,356	162	377	730	0	621	108	264	84	213	45	69				
- GULLS & TERNS	4,712	146	762	11	35	557	165	183	84	375	169	0	111	378	0	0	292	0	364	290	268	594	93				

COASTAL WeBS COUNTS: NORTHUMBERLAND				MLC	M. L. Cadwallender / W. Dickson					SP	S. Pamaby		TAC	T. A. Cadwallender								
February		2016		TB	T. Brewis		KR	K. Redgrave / K. Bradshaw					MK	M. Kerby		MGA	M. G. Anderson					
				AC	A. Craggs								DMT	D. M. Turner		LJM	L. J. McDougall					
				MHu	M. Hutcheson		AB	A. Brunt					PF	P. Fletcher		KVB	K. Brooks					
Site	TOTAL	Berwick North Shore (including Little Beach)	Tweed Estuary	Tweed: A1 By Pass to Horncliffe	Spital - Cocklawburn	Lindisfarne NWR (including Budle Bay) (Budle Bay)	Seahouses - Beadnell	Beadnell - Howick	Boulmer - Alnmouth	Aln Estuary	Cresswell - Newbiggin	Blyth Estuary	Blyth Estuary - Seaton Sluice	St Mary's Island	Whitley Bay - Tynemouth	Tyne North Pier - Fish Quay	East Howdon, (north bank only)	Redheugh - Scotswood Bridge, (north bank)	Scotswood - Newburn Bridge, (north bank)			
Counter		MHu	MHu	TB	MHu	AC	AC	MLC	KR	AB	TAC	MGA	LJM	KVB	SP	MK	DMT	DMT	PF	PF		
Date		18	19	20	16	21	21	20	18/22	20	20	14	18	18	23	28	23	26	21	21		
Red-throated Diver	19	1				2			6	2				3	3	2						
Great Northern Diver	20					20																
Little Grebe	16		1			2					8		4		1							
Great Crested Grebe	2									2												
Slavonian Grebe	5	1				4																
Cormorant	154	14	3		3	15		11	1	3		2	42	2	10	3	33	6	3	3		
Shag	31	9	1		3	6		4	6						2							
Grey Heron	41		20	4	1	5				6	3				1			1				
Mute Swan	53		28	13		6	2		2									1	2	1		
Whooper Swan	6			6																		
Pink-footed Goose	379				4	375																
Greylag Goose	662		2		158	502	500															
Canada Goose	36		1	17							18											
Barnacle Goose	850					850	850															
Dark-bellied Brent Goose	1					1																
Light-bellied Brent Goose	1,264					1263	975			1												
Shelduck	561					455	170	2		2	10		49					40	3			
Wigeon	679		1			200	200			6	472											
Gadwall	32												19		13							
Teal	970		2	7		384	350		36		236		85		22			69	97	32		
Mallard	461		78	21	14	110	100		58	51	59		33		8				22	7		
Pintail	118		1			117																
Shoveler	2					2																
Tufted Duck	25				5						6							14				
Eider	597	23	8		15	163		118	126	51		11	47	13	6	11	5					
Long-tailed Duck	14					14																
Common Scoter	2				2																	
Goldeneye	127		94	3		7		8	4	5	1		5									
Red-breasted Merganser	33	2	6		2	6		1		4	6		6									
Goosander	17		9	8																		
Moorhen	15			1		2					6		1		5							
Coot	11		1		1	3					3				3							
Oystercatcher	1,667	183	34	30	26	228	120	184	147	113	121	173	50	47	141	160	28	1		1		
Ringed Plover	217	12			14	31				11		14	94	15	22	2	2					
Golden Plover	2,658					1300		20	2	240		6			1000	90						
Grey Plover	186	8				130		6		42												
Lapwing	1,289		126	50		221	175	40		180	93	25	52		502							
Knot	1,017					1000	10					3		14								
Sanderling	541	58				165				212		7		5	46	33	15					
Purple Sandpiper	126	22			12			21	38	10		5		8	1	4	5					
Dunlin	1,784	36				1100		3		77		194	214		81		35	44				
Snipe	12					11									1							
Woodcock	1									1												
Bar-tailed Godwit	1,234	2				1159		20		37			16									
Curlew	1,993	28	76	37	58	823	200	162	5	253	319	60	58		92	2	11	2	6	1		
Redshank	1,458	25	128	2	14	441	150	11	48	140	53	43	102	58	151	44	8	177	3	10		
Turnstone	598	176	7		2	25		114	72	41		23	21	13	73	27	4					
Black-headed Gull	2,344	6	224		19	225		130	106		108		176			461	201	477	148	63		
Common Gull	346		4		34	252	20				36		2			6	2		6	4		
Lesser Black-backed Gull	5		1			3														1		
Herring Gull	1,385	24	274		16	63		67	140		19		262			118	212	8	151	31		
Great Black-backed Gull	179	1	4			14	2	6	4		1		55			14	76		4			
Mediterranean Gull	2														1	1						
ADDITIONAL SPECIES																						
Guillemot	2								1							1						
Fulmar	56								56													
European White Front	7				7																	
Little Egret	4					3	1	1														
TOTALS - WILDFOWL	7,203	50	256	80	208	4,514	3,147	144	239	133	828	13	291	18	74	16	38	131	127	43		
- WADERS	14,781	550	371	119	126	6,634	655	581	312	1,357	586	553	607	160	2,110	362	108	224	9	12		
- GULLS & TERNS	4,261	31	507	0	69	557	22	203	250	0	164	0	495	0	1	600	491	485	309	99		





# Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

<http://www.ntbc.org.uk/>

Bulletin 2015 No 3

MONTHLY SUMMARY MARCH 2016

3rd May 2016



## CONTENTS

WeBS inland

## CLASSIFIED LIST HIGHLIGHTS

Tundra Bean Goose	One at Harper's Heugh near Budle Bay on 5th.
American Wigeon	Male still present at Grindon Lough through to 15th.
Smew	Single redheads at Big Waters, Killingworth Lake and Swallow Pond.
Bittern	One or two still being seen at Gosforth Park.
Great White Egret	An adult was first seen at Backworth on 13th, then at Bothal Pond from 14-18th .
Osprey	Early return with single birds noted on 21st at Berwick and Coanwood.
Avocet	First return at Cresswell Pond on 15th with 10 there on 19th.
Golden Plover	Flock of 1800 returning to breeding grounds seen at Longhorsley Moor on 29th.
Common Sandpiper	Early migrant at Whittle Dene Reservoir on 30th.
Greenshank	One at Budle Bay on 14th. Seemingly absent previously this winter.
Long-billed Dowitcher	The first-winter remained at Cresswell Pond all month.
Iceland Gull	Single juveniles at Branton GP, Bothal Pond and QE II CP.
Glaucous Gull	One at Bothal Pond on 17th.
Great Grey Shrike	One in Harwood Forest again from 22nd.
Shorelark	One at Alnmouth from 7th to 10th.
Black Redstart	Singles at Tynemouth and Holy Island.
Scandinavian Rock Pipit	One or two at East Chevington, Fenham le Moor and St Mary's.

## INDOOR MEETINGS

NTBC indoor meetings are held at Northern Rugby Club, McCracken Park, Great North Road, Newcastle, NE3 2DT starting at 7.00pm and generally finish between 9.00pm-9.30pm. The next meeting is after the summer on September 8<sup>th</sup> .:

## FIELD TRIPS

Some great trips are planned for the spring.

### Kielder

15th May 2016

Contact Martin Davison for details [martindavison3@gmail.com](mailto:martindavison3@gmail.com)

### Geltsdale

23rd May 2016

Contact Trevor Blake for details [trevor.1958@live.co.uk](mailto:trevor.1958@live.co.uk)

A Mediterranean  
Gull at Newbiggin  
by Jack Bucknall





**CLASSIFIED LIST****Mute Swan** *Cygnus olor*

QEII CP Lake held 111 on 21st (CDH), 43 were at Killingworth Lake on 21st (MJC), 23 at Warkworth on 2nd (JMA), and ten at Branton GP (MJC). Two to six were at Arcot, Bothal and Linton Ponds, Bolam Lake, Castle Island, Grindon Lough, Hartburn Reservoir, Hauxley Reserve, Hedgeley GP, Holy Island, Newcastle Exhibition and Leazes Parks, North Charlton and Shield on the Wall.



Mute Swans in action at Branton GPs on 20th March by Mike Carr

**Whooper Swan** *Cygnus cygnus*

Northerly movement was fairly conspicuous, with 50 at Cresswell Pond on 1st (EC/JSB), 64 at Budle Bay on 11th (CGK), ten at the Long Nanny Estuary on 12th (TF/JFa), 56 at Whitley Bay (IJ) and 20 at Bothal Pond (TF/JFa) on 26th, and 65 at Longhorsley Moor (AB/LB) and 44 at Holy Island (IK) on 27th. One to six also flew N at Lynemouth and St Mary's and Whitley Bay between 17th-31st, and 13 flew W at Newburn on 13th (PCF). About 120 flew W high over High Brunton (South Tyne) (unknown date; JWP).

58 flew over Branton GP on 12th (IBDa/KDa), 19 over Beal on 12th (IBDa/KDa) and seven over North Sunderland on 26th (JPL). An unknown number flew over Rothbury at 2300h on 12th (TRD/JD).

Peak counts were 80 at Wark on 10th and 57 there on 14th (JDL), 34 at Grindon Lough on 27th (AJR), 22-29 at Derwent Reservoir (IFo), Stag Rocks (26 landed on sea on 14th; GPK) and Widdrington Moor Lake (NFO), and 11-13 at Budle Bay (TF/JFa) and Warkworth (JMA). Six to nine were also at Big Waters, Branton GP, Cresswell Pond, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Pools, Fenham Flats and Haughton Strother GP, and one to two at Ellington, Gosforth Park NR, Rayburn Lake, Swallow Pond and Wooler.

A Whooper Swan

Druridge

17th March

Janet Dean



**Bean Goose** *Anser fabalis*

One, of the Tundra *rossicus* race, was at Harper's Haugh (near Budle Bay) on 5th (IBDa/KDa).

**Pink-footed Goose** *Anser brachyrhynchus*

The only reported northerly movement was at Budle Bay, with 270-650 (MSH/CGK). Large concentrations involved 2,500 at Milfield on 19th (DGB/RHB), about 1,500 at Beadnell on 18th (TRD/JD), about 1,200 at Doddington on 31st (TRD/JD), 800 at Budle Bay on 31st (DGB), 700 at East Chevington on 6th (TF/JFa), and 250-400 at the *Beehive* Flash (Earsdon), Cocklawburn, Elwick and Holywell Dene. Groups of 65-83 were also at Backworth and Maiden's Hall Lake (West Chevington).

**White-fronted Goose** *Anser flavirostris*

Eurasian *albifrons* race birds involved four at East Chevington on 6th (TF/JFa), two at Beadnell on 18th (TRD/JD), two at Bothal Pond on 20th (TF/JFa) and 29th (ADMc), and two at Linton Ponds on 3rd (MSH) and 5th (ADMc).

Birds of the Greenland *flavirostris* race included four at Druridge Pools on 8th (MH/AA), three, with Canada Geese, at Plenmeller Common on 16th (SJH), and perhaps the same three (adults) at Grindon Lough between 27th-30th (AJH/MSH/AJR), while two were at Bothal Pond on 25th (TD).

Un-raced birds involved seven at Cocklawburn on 3rd (BWG) and three at Harper's Heugh (near Budle Bay) on 5th (IBDa/KDa).

**Greylag Goose** *Anser anser*

Moderate numbers included peaks of 130 at East Holywell on 19th (MNC), 122 at Budle Bay on 14th (MSH), 100 at the *Beehive* Flash (Earsdon) on 17th (MSH), and 64-97 at Bothal and Linton Ponds, Grindon Lough, Haughton Strother GP. Counts of 15-30 came from Branton GP, Maiden's Hall Lake, Marden Quarry, and Plenmeller and Ridley Commons, and twos were at Arcot Pond, Bakethin Reservoir, Hauxley Reserve and QEII CP Lake.

**Canada Goose** *Branta canadensis*

79 were at Grindon Lough on 21st (SJH), 72 at Big Waters on 4th (GB), 61 at Hauxley Reserve on 16th (HRS), 57 at Bothal Pond (TD) and Holystone Grange (JR), 23-41 at Castle Island, Linton Ponds, Newcastle Leazes Park and Plenmeller and Ridley Commons, and 15 at QEII CP Lake. Two to six were at Arcot Pond, Bakethin Reservoir and Branton GP.

**Barnacle Goose** *Branta leucopsis*

At Harper's Heugh (near Budle Bay) 18 were present on 5th (IBDa/KDa), 17 on 14th (MSH), and eight on 18th and 31st (DGB/JPL).

**Brent Goose** *Branta bernicla*

Pale-bellied *hrota* race birds included about 500 at Budle Bay on 12th (TF/JFa), and five at Holy Island causeway on 18th (TRD/JD). A total of 90 dark-bellied *bernicla* race birds were at the 'rocket field', Holy Island on 11th (IK). Un-raced birds included 1,000 at Budle Bay on 8th (DGB) and 10th (JPL), and 850 on 11th (CGK).

**Shelduck** *Tadorna tadorna*

Peak counts involved 235 at Budle Bay on 11th (MSH), 67 at the Blyth Estuary on 23rd (LJM), up to 52 at Howdon during the month (CB), and 13-14 at Cresswell Pond and West Stobswood Pool. Five to eight were at Backworth, Castle Island, East Holywell, Elswick, Grindon Lough and Holy Island, three to four at Arcot Pond, Haughton Strother GP, and one to two at Bothal and Swallow Ponds, Branton GP, Hauxley Reserve and West Hartford.

**Mandarin** *Aix galericulata*

Three (two drakes) were at Redmire (near Falstone) and three (two drakes) at Ridley Stokoe on 25th (JR). A pair was noted at the latter site on 8th (EC) and at nearby Smalesmouth on 20th (TRD/JD). A pair was noted mating at Bakethin Reservoir on 20th (JMA). Single drakes were at Haughton Strother GP on 16th (MR) and Holywell Pond on 13th (SPP). The latter displayed to Mallards.

**Wigeon** *Anas penelope*

Derwent Reservoir held 618 on 19th (IFo), 470 were at Grindon Lough on 10th (SJH), 380 at Druridge Pools on 5th (TD), 310 at Budle Bay on 11th (CGK), 200-242 at Big Waters, Bothal and Cresswell Ponds, and 114-198 at Gosforth Park NR, Hauxley Reserve, Hoppen Kiln Flash and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. Counts of 22-50 also came from Backworth and Linton Ponds, Branton and Hedgeley GPs, Maiden's Hall Lake, Shield on the Wall and Woodhorn Flashes.

**American Wigeon** *Anas americana*

A drake remained at Grindon Lough on 10th (SJH) and 13th (MRS).

**Gadwall** *Anas strepera*

Four flew S at Seaton Sluice on 26th (SSWT). Peak counts were 49 at Bothal Pond on 31st (TF/JFa), 37 at Caistrion on 13th (JD), 22 at Castle Island on 20th (DM/STH), 13 at St Mary's Wetland on 7th (MSH), and five to nine at Arcot Pond, Big Waters, East Chevington and Howdon. Three to four were also found at Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, Gosforth Park NR, Haughton Strother GP and Hauxley Reserve, and one to two at Hedgeley GP, Ladyburn Lake, Linton Ponds, St Mary's Wetland and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.





A Drake Wigeon at QEII CP by Jack Bucknall

**Teal** *Anas crecca*

Largest concentrations were 380 at Grindon Lough on 10th (SJH), 340 at Budle Bay on 14th (CGK), 221 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 7th (SR), and 180 at Howdon (CB). Counts of 53-90 came from Backworth and Bothal Ponds, Big Waters, Hoppen Kiln Flash, while ten to 40 were at Arcot, Linton and Middle Ord Ponds, Castle Island, Derwent Reservoir, Elswick, Gosforth Park NR, Lynemouth Flash, Holy Island 'rocket field', Monks' House Pool and West Hartford.



A Common Teal At Howdon Wetland by Colin Bradshaw



**Mallard** *Anas platyrhynchos*

Poor counts this month, with peaks of 54 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 7th (SR), 48 at Grindon Lough on 10th (SJH), and 23-35 at Castle Island, Chirton Dene Park (North Shields), Ladyburn and QEII CP Lakes, Newcastle Leazes Park and Groups of 12-13 were at Bothal Pond and Hauxley Reserve. An early breeding record involved a brood of two tiny ducklings at Newcastle Leazes Park on 21st (DM).

**Pintail** *Anas acuta*

A count of 150 at Fenham Flats on 1st included 99+ drakes (MH/AA), and 30 birds were noted there on 5th (IBDa/KDa). Elsewhere, five to six were at Broomlee and Grindon Loughs (SJH/MR et al.), and Druridge Pools (TF/JFa/NFO et al.), three at Haughton Strother GP, and one to two at Backworth, Bothal and Cresswell Ponds, Big Waters, Budle Bay, Derwent Reservoir, East Chevington and Holy Island Lough.

**Shoveler** *Anas clypeata*

29 (20 drakes) were at Druridge-Warkworth Lane on 8th (MH/AA), 28 at Druridge Pools on 29th (LJM), 17 at Bothal Pond on 11th (TF/JFa), ten at Cresswell Pond on 30th (TRD), five to eight at Arcot Pond, Gosforth Park NR, Grindon Lough, Holy Island 'rocket field' and Monks' House Pool, and three at Big Waters. One to two visited Dinnington, Holy Island Lough and Hoppen Kiln Flash.

**Pochard** *Aythya ferina*

The largest counts were 21 (15 drakes) at Holywell Pond on 2nd (GPK), ten at Bothal Pond on 16th (TRD/JD), five to nine at Arcot and Swallow Ponds, Big Waters and Gosforth Park NR. One to two were also at Branton, Haughton Strother and Hedgeley GPs, and Killingworth and Widdrington Moor Lakes.

**Tufted Duck** *Aythya fuligula*

Peak counts involved 90 at Grindon Lough on 13th (MRS), 72 at Killingworth Lake on 21st (LJM), 41-45 at Haughton Strother GP (MR) and QEII CP Lake (CDH), 21-34 at Holywell and Swallow Ponds, and Newcastle Exhibition and Leazes Parks, and ten to 19 at Arcot, Bothal and Linton Ponds, Gosforth Park NR, Holy Island Lough, Howdon, Maiden's Hall Lake and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

**Scaup** *Aythya marila*

Singles were at Druridge Pools on 25th (TF/JFa), Haughton Strother GP on 2nd (MR) and Killingworth Lake all month (AW).



A Scaup stretches its wings at Killingworth by Chris Barlow

**Eider** *Somateria mollissima*

30 at Holy Island on 17th (JMA) and 20 off Whitley Bay on 20th (IJ) were the only reports.

**Long-tailed Duck** *Clangula hyemalis*

About 100, in three flocks, were at Stag Rocks on 4th (TD), and 55 were noted there on 7th (JDL/DGB), 12 were at Cheswick on 12th (IBDa/KDa), ten off Budle Point on 11th (CGK/GPK), and two at Cocklawburn.

**Common Scoter** *Melanitta nigra*

92 were at Cocklawburn on 14th (BWG), 20 at Stag Rocks on 14th (MSH), and two to three at East Chevington and Whitley Bay.

**Velvet Scoter** *Melanitta fusca*

The sole report was of one at Stag Rocks on 2nd (JPL).

**Goldeneye** *Bucephala clangula*

Peak counts were 85 at East Chevington north pool on 12th (TF/JFa), 73 at the Tweed Estuary on 11th (BWG), 60 at Grindon Lough on 13th (MRS), 22-28 at Killingworth (LJM) and QEII CP (CDH) Lakes, and ten to 15 at Big Waters, Bolam Lake, Bothal and Swallow Ponds, Broomlee Lough, Castron and Horncliffe. Six to nine were at Bakethin and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, Bolam Lake, Branton GP, Greenlee Lough, Tyne Green and Widdrington Moor Lake, and fours at Bakethin Reservoir, Castle Island, Druridge Pools and Gosforth Park NR. One to two were also at Chirdon Bridge, Cresswell Pond, Derwent Reservoir, Hauxley Reserve, Hedgeley GP, Holy Island Lough and Ladyburn Lake. Display was noted at Killingworth Lake on 19th (GB).

**Smew** *Mergellus albellus*

Single 'redheads' were at Big Waters on sporadic dates between 2nd-31st but not throughout (GB/AJR et al.), Killingworth Lake sporadically between 1st-29th (AW), and Swallow Pond on 12th and 16th (GPK/SPP).

**Red-breasted Merganser** *Mergus serrator*

28 at Budle Bay on 11th included much display (CGK) and 23 were noted there on 22nd (DGB), 12 were at East Chevington north pool on 27th (NFO), five to seven at Druridge Pools (TD), Ladyburn Lake (MSH/LJM) and Stag Rocks (MSH), threes at Cresswell Pond and Widdrington Moor Lake, and one at Castle Island.

**Goosander** *Mergus merganser*

14 were counted on the River Tyne between Newburn-Wylam on 28th (AW), eight were at Hedgeley GP on 3rd (JMA) and Killingworth Lake on 1st (AW), five to six at Branton GP (TRD/JD) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs (SR), and three to four at Airy Holm Reservoir, Chirdon Bridge and Whitley Bay. One to two visited Alwin Valley, Bakethin Reservoir, the Blyth Estuary, Budle Bay, Castle Island, Darras Hall, Furnace Bridge (Bedlington), Gosforth Park NR, Hedgeley GP, Kielder Castle, Low Angerton, Mitford, Ridley Stokoe and Smalesmouth.



A pair of Goosanders at Rothbury

16th March by Janet Dean

**Red-legged Partridge** *Alectoris rufa*

21 were at Ridley Common and four at Fell House Farm (Plenmeller Common) on 16th (SJH). Three were in the Hawsen Burn area (The Cheviots) on 27th (NFO) and one to two were reported from Bamburgh, Hedgehope, Hepple Whitfield and Rennington.



**Red Grouse** *Lagopus lagopus*

In the Cheviots the highest numbers reported were 27 at Hedgehope on 20th (IRD). In the Pennines, 26 were in the Carrshield area and 15 at Paxhill (Allenheads) on 7th, followed by 13 at Plenmeller Common on 16th (SJH). Elsewhere, 13 were at Hepple Whitefield on 28th (TRD/JD) and one to seven, including many displaying males, were at Addycombe (Rothbury), Broadstruther (The Cheviots), Carey Burn, Coanwood Burn, on the moor to the south of Fontburn Reservoir, Hawsen Burn, Knockshield Burn area and Swinhope Shield.

**Black Grouse** *Tetrao tetrix*

The peak counts were 12 (all males) at Swinhope Shield (Allendale) and eight (six greyhens and two males) at Knockshield Burn (Allendale) on 7th (SJH). Seven males were at Wolf Hills (Whitfield Moors) on 15th (MH/AA) and one to two were at four other locations.

**Grey Partridge** *Perdix perdix*

A total of 16, all in pairs, were at Beal Point (Lindisfarne NNR) on 18th (TRD/JD), four were at Fenham-le-Moor on 15th (JD) and one to two were at many other locations including Backworth, Beacon Hill (Cramlington), Bothal Pond, Boulmer, Castle Hill Farm (Berwick) Cresswell Pond, Ellington, Haughton Strother GP, Linden Hall, Pegwsood, Prestwick Carr, Rowley Burn and Whitelea Horse Paddocks (Cramlington).

**Pheasant** *Phasianus colchicus*

12 were at Fawcett Hill (Hexham) on 18th and ten at Horton Grange (Blagdon) on 16th (PCF). Six (three males and three females, including one melanistic female) were regularly in a Fulbeck garden (Morpeth) throughout the month (TD) and one to two were regularly seen at various locations throughout Holywell Dene (RJP).

**Red-throated Diver** *Gavia stellata*

Seaton Sluice Watch Tower recorded a monthly total of 25 with 15 N and ten S in 19 hrs of watching (SSWT). Elsewhere the highest count was six at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 29th (MSH) and one to five were at many other coastal localities including a single on the River Tyne at Tynemouth on 6th and one also on the Tyne Estuary on 13th (DRW), the River Tweed Estuary on 21st (BWG) and Blyth Harbour on 26th (PCF).

**Black-throated Diver** *Gavia arctica*

Only singles reported, from Seaton Sluice on 10th, Guile Point (Lindisfarne NNR) on 13th and a bird in full breeding plumage heading N past Castle Point (Holy Island) on 28th.

**Great Northern Diver** *Gavia immer*

The only record was one at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 14th (MSH).

**Fulmar** *Fulmarus glacialis*

The peak at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) was 12 on 20th (IJ) and ten was the maximum recorded at Hartley Bay cliffs (Seaton Sluice) on 14th (SPP). Dunstanburgh cliffs held at least five pairs on 20th (AJR) and one to two were at Berwick Little Beach, Seahouses, Snab Point (Cresswell) and Stag Rocks.

**Gannet** *Morus bassanus*

Increased evidence of movement came from Seaton Sluice with 180 N in one hour on 9th and 170 N in two hours on 5th (SSWT). Elsewhere, 30 flew S at Berwick on 18th (TRD/JD) and three to ten were reported from various other coastal localities.

**Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo*

37 were in Blyth Harbour on 7th (STH) and 16 was the month maximum at Derwent Reservoir on 9th (IFo). 16 were at North Shields jetty on 31st (JMA), 15 were at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) on 26th (IJ) and 14 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 7th (SR). One to four were at several other locations including one being repeatedly chased by an angler in a rowing boat at Newcastle Leazes Park on 1st (GB).

**Shag** *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

Again, low numbers reported this month. The only records in 19 hours of sea-watching from Seaton Sluice Watch Tower were three N between 8th–9th. The only other records were four at Blyth Harbour, two at Berwick, one at Tynemouth and one on the River Tyne at Tynemouth.

**Bittern** *Botaurus stellaris*

Two were present at Gosforth Park NR throughout the month (NHSN/GPK/GB).

**Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta*

Five, seen near the causeway on 18th, was the highest count from the Holy Island/Lindisfarne NNR area (JDL). Two were present at Budle Bay on various dates and also at Castle Island (River Wansbeck) on 20th. Singles were at Backworth, Bamburgh, Beal, Big Waters NWT, Brandon (Breamish Valley), Castron, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, Dukes Pond (Rising Sun CP), Hauxley NWT, Sleek Burn, and Yarrow Slake (River Tweed).



Two Egrets from Bothal Pond on 16th March by Tim Dean.  
Top a Little and bottom a Great White

**Great White Egret** *Ardea alba*

An individual was found at Backworth on 13th (CGK) and then relocated to Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) the following day where it was well observed until 18th (TD/TF/JFa/JR *et al*).

**Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea*

Up to six were present at Gosforth Park NR throughout the month (NHSN) and six also at Hauxley NWT on 16th (HRS). One to five were regularly seen at Holywell Dene (RJP) and four were at Amble Weir on 7th (JMA). One to three were at nine localities, including a heronry at Ashington.



**Little Grebe** *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Peak counts included eight at Caistron on 13th (JD), five at Swallow Pond on 24th (GPK) and five at Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) on 26th (TF/JFa). One to four were at many further typical localities with trilling heard and courtship observed. A single at Howdon from 26th was the first there for two years (CB).



A Great Crested Grebe at Killingworth Lake by Alan Jack

**Great Crested Grebe** *Podiceps cristatus*

East Chevington peaked at seven on 27th (TF/JFa) whilst Whittle Dene Reservoirs held five on 25th (SR), as did Derwent Reservoir on 28th (IFo). One to four were at nine other likely breeding locations with several observed nest building and displaying. A fresh corpse was found dead at Leazes Park (Newcastle) on 24th (DM/GB) and the observer was advised by anglers that it had been alive and well between 22nd-23rd, which would have been a Town Centre lifer for him! First record for Leazes Park.

**Slavonian Grebe** *Podiceps auritus*

The highest count this winter so far was a total of 15 at Stag Rocks, Bamburgh on 14th (MSH), numbers subsequently declining thereafter. A single was starting to acquire summer plumage at East Chevington on 13th (NFO).

**Red Kite** *Milvus Milvus*

Two birds were at Low Waskerley on 6th (IFo) and two were near Whittonstall on 31st with one there on 11th (lfo). other single birds were seen at Corbridge on 24th and 31st (MR) and at Oakwood on 26th (ALT) and a bird was flying S over the Budge Fields (Druridge Pools) on 28th (ADMc).

**Marsh Harrier** *Circus aeruginosus*

Most of the sightings came from East Chevington with a male on 12th (TF/JFa) and a female on several dates (TB/TRD/TF/JFa/MH) and different females were noted at Druridge Pools on 25th (TF/JFa), Warkworth Lane (Ellington) on 26th (TB) and at Cresswell Pond on 27th (IRD).

**Hen Harrier** *Circus cyaneus*

A ringtail male flew over moor land in the north of the County on 11th (MH). Female/ringtails were noted near Harwood on 12th and 21st (MH) and at another site on 17th (AB/LB). An unsexed bird was heading NW over the River Tyne E of Ryton golf course on 28th (AW).

**Goshawk** *Accipiter gentilis*

All sightings this month both came from Harwood Forest with three birds on 21st (MH) and two + on 30th (TF/JFa).

**Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter nisus*

Three + birds were at Harwood Forest on 30th (TF/JFa) and three were at Crooked Oak (Derwent Reservoir) on 31st (IK). Two birds were at Howdon throughout the month (CB), East Chevington, Holywell Dene and Kenton (Newcastle) on 25th (TF/JFa/PCF/MRS).and at Single birds were seen at Cramlington, Jesmond Dene, Kielder Castle, Killingworth Lake, Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay), Netherwitton, and South Gosforth.

**Common Buzzard** *Buteo buteo*

On 25th 10+ were at East Chevington (TF/JFa) and eight were in the Cheviots between Ingram Glidders to Shilmoor on 13th (MJC). Seven birds were seen at Widehope/Alnwick Moor area on 11th (MH) and at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 20th (BWG); six were at Harwood Forest on 30th (TF/JFa). Gosforth Park NR had a peak count of five birds during the month (NHSN) and five were at Winnows Hill Common on 17th (IK). One to four birds were reported from over 45 sites.

**Osprey** *Pandion haliaetuss*

On 21st single birds were flying W up the South Tyne valley (SJH/AJR) and at East Ord (Berwick) (BWG).

**Water Rail** *Rallus aquaticus*

A peak count of six + birds were reported from Gosforth Park NR throughout the month (NHSN) and a peak count of three were at Cresswell Pond on 10th and 24th (ADMc *et al*).Single birds were also heard or seen at Backworth, Big Waters NWT , Branton GPs, Broomlee Lough, Cresswell Pond, Prestwick Carr and Woodhorn Flash.

**Moorhen** *Gallinula chloropus*

12 birds were at Big Waters NWT on 2nd (GB), ten were at Hauxley NWT on 16th (HRS). Nine were at Haughton Strother GPs (Humshaugh) on 16th (MR) and at Castle Island on 20th (DM/STH), and seven were at Leazes Park (Newcastle) on 7th (DM) and at QEII CP Lake on 21st (CDH). One to six birds were seen at eight sites.

**Coot** *Fulica atra*

Bothal Pond had 44 birds on 25th (TD) and 21 were at QEII CP Lake on 21st (CDH) were the highest counts. One to 14 birds were at Arcot Pond, Branton GPs, Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Grindon Lough, Hauxley NWT, Holy Island Lough, Howdon, Humshaugh (Haughton Strother GP), Leazes Park (Newcastle), Linton Pond and at Monk's House Pool.

**Avocet** *Recurvirostra avosetta*

All records relate to Cresswell Pond with the first of the year noted on 15th to 17th (TB *et al.*). Almost suddenly, ten were present on 19th (MJC) then numbers fluctuated between two and five until 30th when eight were noted.



A welcome return to Cresswell Pond

Ten Avocets on 19th March by Mike Carr

**Oystercatcher** *Haematopus ostralegus*

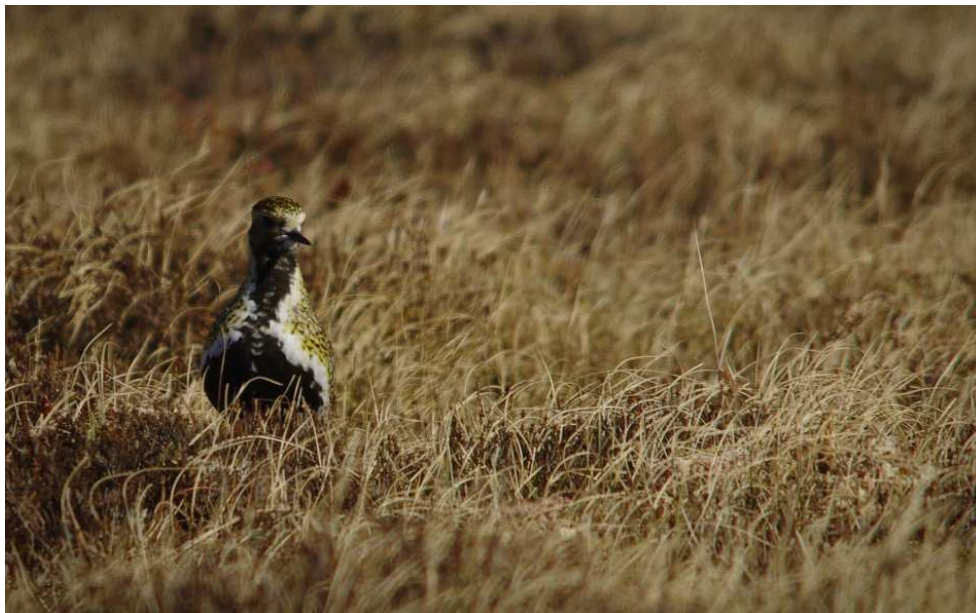
The return to inland breeding areas was well under way early in the month with several large gatherings noted. A further influx at Derwent Reservoir took the total to 174 on 7th (IFo), 108 were in the Melkridge village area on 9th (SJH) and later 80 were at Branton GP on 26th (TRD/JD). Also Featherstone bridge end, Hexham Tyne Green, Haughton Strother GP and Whittle Dene Reservoirs had 14-32 around mid month and another 22 widespread inland sites had two to eight. A vocal group flew E at Shiremoor at 22:30h on 3rd (CGK), indicating nocturnal movement.

Coastal concentrations were still evident with high tide roosts of 300 at St Cuthbert's Island on 27th (IK) and 92 in Budle Bay on 11th (CGK). Hauxley NWT, and West Chevington had 43-45 at times and two to 25 were noted at a further 12 typical locations.



**Golden Plover** *Pluvialis apricaria*

The largest flock was of around 1,800 in circling flight before landing in an adjacent field at Longhorsley Moor on 29th (AB/LB). Plenmeller Common held 510 on 8th and around 520 on 29th (SJH), many males in the latter group boldly marked suggesting the northern race. Other higher congregations were of 350 at Fenham-le-Moor on 17th (JDL), 264 at Prestwick Carr on 5th (PCF), around 200 on Whitfield Moors on 15th and 130 in Allendale, Low Acton Farm on 7th. Also 90 were at Grindon Lough on 10th and 42 in a different part of Allendale on 7th and two to 25 were noted in another seven widespread potential breeding areas.



A Golden Plover at Cushat Law on 25th March by Mike Carr

**Grey Plover** *Pluvialis squatarola*

There were just two records submitted: 70 in a high tide roost in Budle Bay on 11th (CGK) and two at Hauxley NWT on 16th.

**Lapwing** *Vanellus vanellus*

The vast majority of a wealth of reports involved gatherings, some large, in potential breeding areas across the county and many of the records refer to territorial display. In Allendale there were 250-300 in groups on 7th and 16th, 180 around Melkridge on 9th, 150 at Ridley Common on 16th, 150 at Coanwood Burn/Coldshield on 21st, 120 at Hollin Green on 7th and up to 100 in three sections of Plenmeller Common (all SJH). Other higher totals included 250 at Haughton Strother GP on 2nd (MR), 150+ at Hoppen Kiln Flash on 11th, 130 at Grindon Lough on 21st and 125 at Longwitton on 5th. Another 17 widespread locations held up to 35 at times.

**Little Ringed Plover** *Charadrius dubius*

An early one visited Haughton Strother GP on 28th (MR).

**Ringed Plover** *Charadrius hiaticula*

The largest gatherings were of 37 roosting on a factory roof at Blyth Harbour on 7th (STH) and 19 on the same day at Lynemouth Flash. Elsewhere one to six were noted at Backworth, Berwick, Derwent Reservoir, East Chevington, Hedgeley GP, Haughton Strother GP and at Stobswood.

A Ringed Plover at St. Mary's  
by Alan Jack

**Curlew** *Numenius arquata*

Returns to upland breeding areas were much in evidence from early in the month, including 140 in Allendale, Low Acton Farm on 7th (SJH) and next day a flock of 36 flew W at Derwent Reservoir and 33 arrived at Plenmeller Common later. Over the next weeks up to 25 were noted, including many engaged in territorial activity, at Carrshield, in two areas of the Cheviots, at Grindon Lough, Haughton Strother GP, Hollin Green, Langleeford, Longhorsley Moor, Ridley Common, Slaley and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

Winterers and passage migrants continued to feature along the coast and hinterland, notably 140 on 5th (TD) down to 125 on 20th at Druridge Pools, 109 at Hauxley NWT on 16th (HRS), a peak of 61 at Prestwick Carr on 18th, 60 at Yarrow Slake on 22nd, 54 at Howdon on 26th, 50 at Amble Weir on 7th, 42 at West Ord on 4th and 40 at Bamburgh on 11th. Smaller numbers were found in another 11 widespread localities.



**Black-tailed Godwit** *Limosa limosa*

Ten were in the R Blyth estuary on 25th (CGK/GPK). At Howdon three were present on 28th with two there on 26th and one on 3rd and singles were at Fenham Flats on 13th and in the Rocket Field, Holy island on 28th. At the latter site the species was unusually absent this winter.

**Bar-tailed Godwit** *Limosa lapponica*

Two high tide roosts in the north enabled good concentrations: at St Cuthbert's Island 350 on 27th (IK) and 85 in Budle Bay on 11th (CGK). The only others reported were three and four at Berwick on 1st and 27th respectively.

**Turnstone** *Arenaria interpres*

There were relatively few reports: peaks of 50 at St Mary's on 17th (MSH) and 30+ at Cresswell Pond on 22nd and one to four at Berwick, Hauxley NWT, Seahouses and Whitley Bay.

**Knot** *Calidris canutus*

The peak in Budle Bay was 65 on 11th (CGK), 20 was the maximum at Seaton Sluice on 5th and 11 were noted at St Mary's on 20th.

**Ruff** *Calidris pugnax*

Singles appeared at Hauxley NWT on 16th (HRS) and at Druridge Pools on four dates during 19th to 27th (TF/JFa *et al.*).

**Sanderling** *Calidris alba*

At Seaton Point, Boulmer about 230 roosted at high tide on 13th (NFO). Elsewhere, 55 were in Budle Bay on 11th, the most at Berwick, Little Beach was 26 on 1st with up to 20 in Druridge Bay and 15 at Whitley Bay.

**Dunlin** *Calidris alpina*

Easily the most were 135 in Budle Bay on 11th (CGK) and around 100 at Seahouses on 17th (JMA); 20-30 were at Blyth Harbour, Cresswell Pond and St Mary's and small numbers at Berwick and Tynemouth.

**Purple Sandpiper** *Calidris maritima*

Counts of 60 were made at Stag Rocks on 7th (JDL) and 29th (MSH) and also at Seahouses on 8th (SMa). The most elsewhere were 13 at Tynemouth on 19th and 11 at Craster Harbour on 20th, with six or fewer at Berwick, Boulmer, Newbiggin, Seaton Sluice and Whitley Bay.

**Common Sandpiper** *Actitis hypoleucos*

An early individual was present at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 30th (MSH).

**Green Sandpiper** *Tringa ochropus*

Two were noted at Hedgeley GP on 2nd (TRD/JD) then three there on 6th (IBDa/KDa); two were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 7th (SR) and one on 18th. Other singles were found on the R Wansbeck at Middleton on 21st and on four dates at Haughton Strother GP during 7th to 22nd.

**Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia*

One flew N calling over Holywell Pond on 13th (SPP) and one was in Budle Bay on 14th (CGK).

**Redshank** *Tringa totanus*

Again the highest count was made at Howdon, 289 on 7th (CB). Cresswell Pond held a maximum of 150 on 24th (MSH), 85 were at Hauxley NWT on 16th, 71 on the R Tyne at Newcastle Business Park on 16th and 36 at Holy Island causeway on 17th; 13 were at Lynemouth Flash on 7th.

Most other reports concerned records from potential breeding areas from 13th; up to 12 at Allendale, Black Middens, Coanwood, Derwent Reservoir, Grindon Lough, Melkridge, Plenmeller Common and Ridley Common.

A pair of Redshank

Howdon Wetland

Colin Bradshaw

**Jack Snipe** *Limnocryptes minimus*

There were several reports of singles: on four dates at Backworth (CGK/GPK), on 14th at Newbiggin (CB/JGS), also on 14th at Haughton Strother GP (MR), Fenham Flats on 21st and at East Chevington, North Pool on 27th (ADMc).



**Long-billed Dowitcher** *Limnodromus scolopaceus*

The long-staying individual in Druridge Bay remained all month at Cresswell Pond (ADMc *et al*).



The LDB flies into Cresswell Pond with a Redshank.  
By Colin Bradshaw

**Woodcock** *Scolopax rusticola*

Five were found on Bewick Moor on 28th (MJC) and three flew over a road at Rothbury at dusk on 2nd (TRD), presumably having been disturbed nearby. Singletons were seen at Cramlington, Gosforth Park NR, Kirkley Hall, Longhorsley Moor, a cemetery in North Shields, Ryal, Swallow Pond, Upper Coquetdale and Widehope.

**Snipe** *Gallinago gallinago*

The peak at Backworth was 56 on 13th (CGK) and at Haughton Strother GP the maximum was 27 on 11th (MR); 18 were at Newbiggin on 14th and 16 at Arcot Lane Flash on 20th. Eight or fewer were noted at another eight locations at, or near, the coast.

Inland, two were displaying in Allendale on 7th with many others found in the western uplands from 16th, territorial evidence being noted in another ten areas.

**Auk** *sp*

Apart from 150 moving N in one hour at Seaton Sluice on 10th, few were recorded there during the month (SSWT).

**Razorbill** *Alca torda*

Bamburgh, Stag Rocks held 14 on 14th (MSH) with two to ten there on other dates (AA/MH/TRD/JD) and elsewhere, two were at Druridge, Dunstanburgh Cliffs and St Mary's Island (TRD/JD/MSH/AJR).

**Little Auk** *Alle alle*

Two flew N together at Tynemouth on 19th (SPP).

**Guillemot** *Uria aalge*

At Stag Rocks, 22 were recorded on 14th (MSH) and on 3rd, nine were at Cocklawburn (BWG). One to two were at four other localities from Druridge to Whitley Bay (TRD/LJM/IJ/PCF).

**Sandwich Tern** *Sterna sandvicensis*

The first sighting of the year came from Tynemouth where two flew N on 25th (DRW) and thereafter two were on Bamburgh beach on 29th (PS/NNBC) and six on rocks offshore at Berwick, Little Beach on 31st (TRD/JD).



**Kittiwake** *Rissa tridactyla*

The maximum count from Seaton Sluice was 65 N, 170 S in one hour on 4th (SSWT). A total of 177 were on the cliffs at Tynemouth Priory on 30th (SPP) and at other nesting sites 213 were on the Tyne Bridge in Newcastle on 22nd (DM) with around 60 pairs on Dunstanburgh Cliffs on 20th (AJR). At other Newcastle City colonies, 28 were recorded on The Guildhall and eight on Lombard House on 22nd (DM). Up to 15 were at Whitley Bay, Rockcliffe on 26th (IJ).



A Kittiwake in flight at Tynemouth by Alan Jack

**Black-headed Gull** *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

The Plenmeller Common breeding colony held 500-600 birds on 16th (SJH) and by mid month the Gosforth Park platform carried at least 50 pairs (NHSN). Numerous gatheringss were recorded elsewhere with a maximum of 550 at Budle Point on 11th (CGK), 200-300 at Castle Island, Grindon Lough, Melkridge and QEII CP Lake (DM/CDH/SJH), 50-150 at Amble Links, Druridge Bay CP, Exhibition Park, Haughton Strother GP, Jesmond Dene, Leazes Park, Whitley Bay (JMA/DM/HRS/TD/IJ) and up to 50 at eight other widespread coastal and inland localities. A German ringed bird X3C1 was in the Brier Dene car park on 7th (PCF).

**Mediterranean Gull** *Larus melanocephalus*

The maximum count from Newbiggin was 14 on 6th, comprising three adults, four 1st-winters and seven 2nd-winters (TF/JFa) and on 1st, five un-aged birds were there (STH). Several other localities held one to two birds of differing ages, including Bothal Pond, Branton GP, Seaton Sluice, St Mary's Island, Swallow Pond and Woodhorn Flashes; an unusual record was an immature in Leazes Park, Newcastle on 12th, a first record for a regular observer at this site (DM).

**Common Gull** *Larus canus*

Many counts were recorded as migrant birds moved N through the county towards northern breeding areas. From around mid month flocks of 200-500 were seen at Blanchland, Budle Point, Longhorsley, Otterburn and West Newton (IK/CGK/JR), 100-200 at Chirdon Bridge, Flotterton (Coquetdale), Grindon Lough and Haughton Strother GP (SJH/JR/MR) and up to 70 at seven other localities.

**Lesser Black-backed Gull** *Larus fuscus graelsii*

The species was well reported as the numbers of returning birds built up during the month. Five in Budle Bay on 1st (MH/AA) increased to at least 25 there from 11th (CGK/GPK/MSH) with ten at West Hartford later in the month (LJM/DM). Elsewhere, three to six frequented East Chevington, Grindon Lough, Haughton Strother GP, Jesmond Dene and Swallow Pond (MR/MJCo/TRD/SJH/SPP) with one to two at 16 other widespread inland and coastal localities.

**Herring Gull** *Larus argentatus argenteus*

The largest concentrations were recorded in the North Shields area with 220 at the Fish Quay and 200 at the Black Middens on 31st (JMA). Further north on 17th (JMA), 100 were in Budle Bay with a similar number off Holy Island Castle and 40 at Monks' House Pool. At other sites, 10-40 were at Castle Island, Jesmond Dene, Leazes Park, QE II CP Lake and Whitley Bay (Rockcliffe) with one to eight at Exhibition Park and West Hartford. An adult bird at the Long Nanny on 12th carried an orange ring V5BT, marked as a 1st-winter in early 2012 at Pitsea Landfill Site, Essex (TF/JFa).

**Iceland Gull** *Larus glaucooides*

A 1st-winter bird was briefly at Swallow Pond on 1st (SPP) but a more unusual inland record was of a 1st-winter at Branton GP on 6th (AH/SR/TRD/JD/IBDa/KDa) which was there again on 30th (MJC). The long-staying 2nd-winter bird at the QE II CP Lake was again seen there from 24th-27th (TF/JFa/ADMc) and probably the same individual was at Bothal Pond on 17th (ADMc).



The first winter Iceland Gull at QEII CP  
by Jonathan Farooqi on 27th March

**Glaucous Gull** *Larus hyperboreus*

An un-aged bird was reported at Bothal Pond on 17th (TB).

**Great Black-backed Gull** *Larus marinus*

Seven adults soared over Coanwood Burn/Coldshield on 21st (SJH), six were noted at Whitley Bay on 6th (IJ) and at Castle Island on 20th (DM) with two on the River Tyne at Newcastle Business Park on 16th (DM).

**Stock Dove** *Columba oenas*

Well reported with a high count of 46 at Howdon on 28th (CB), 20 at Backworth on 13th (CGK/GPK), 18 at Big Waters NWT on 1st with 16 near there on 23rd (GB/AJR), 17 at Low Acton Farm (Allendale) on 7th (SJH) and 11 at Gosforth Park on 7th including a pair at nest box (LJM). One to six were at 16 other widespread localities.

A Stock Dove in  
Tim Dean's  
Rothbury garden





**Woodpigeon** *Columba palumbus*

A count of 1000 at Lynemouth Dene on 14th (MJC), 500 at Haughton Strother GP (Humshaugh) on 7th (MR), 300 at Prestwick Carr on 10th, 200 at Hartley West Farm on 13th (PCF) and 150 at Low Hauxley on 7th (JMA). 34 to 90 were at Allendale, Bewick Moor, Derwent Reservoir and Newbiggin with two to ten at three other locations.

**Collared Dove** *Streptopelia decaocto*

Just two reports of four at Spittal (Berwick) on 11th (BWG) and a pair at Holy Island village on 17th (JMA).

**Barn Owl** *Tyto alba*

All reports of singles and all in the first half of the month. At Battle Bridge and Whitton Dene (Rothbury) on 3rd, Steads Burn Opencast on 5th, Cresswell Pond, Haydon Bridge, Seaton Sluice and Whittingham on 6th, Alnwick Moor, Coanwood Common on 7th and hunting at Cresswell Pond at 10.15am on 12th.

**Little Owl** *Athene noctua*

Singles at Derwent Reservoir from 1st to 3rd (IFo), near Big Waters NWT on 20th (GB) and throughout the month at Shiremoor (CGK/GPK).

**Tawny Owl** *Strix aluco*

On 2nd two were at Rothley (TRD) with singles in the observers garden at Fulbeck (Morpeth) on 5th (TD), at Dinnington on 6th (PCF), Kirkley Hall on 10th (CW), College Valley on 12th (JR), Northumberland Park (North Shields) on 21st (KWY) and Hazlerigg (near Wideopen) on 23rd (GB).

**Short-eared Owl** *Asio flammeus*

Three or four hunted the roadside between the Gibbet and Elsdon on 20th (TRD/JD), three at Prestwick Carr on 31st (PCF) with two between Ingram Gidders / Shilmoor (Cheviot) on 13th and Bewick Moor on 30th (MJC). Display was noted at Steads Burn Opencast on 5th (MH) with singles at Prestwick Carr all month, Berwick G.C. on 10th, Whitley Bay on 13th, Fenham-le-Moor and Coquet Cairn (Simonside) on 17th, Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 19th and Maidens Hall Lake (West Chevington) on 20th.



A Shortie photographed quartering an upland site by Chris Barlow

**Kingfisher** *Alcedo atthis*

Two fishing at Jesmond Dene on 7th (MJCo) with singles at Horncliffe and Whiteadder Point (Berwick) on 8th, Branton GP on 20th & 28th and between Newburn and Wylam on 28th.

**Green Woodpecker** *Picus viridis*

One or more regularly at Gosforth Park and Rothbury during the month. Singles also at Bolam Lake CP and Callaly on 6th, High House Woods (Morpeth) on 7th, Prestwick Carr on 12th, 18th and 22nd, Newburn on 13th and Crooked Oak (near Derwent Reservoir) on 31st.

**Great Spotted Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos major*

Peak counts of four at Lynemouth Dene on 14th and Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 29th (MJC/TB), three at Ha'penny Woods (Blyth) and Killingworth Lake both on 1st (LJM/AW), Jesmond Dene on 6th (MJCo), Prestwick Carr on 13th (PCF) and Harwood on 22nd (MJC). One to two were at 18 other widespread localities.

**Kestrel** *Falco tinnunculus*

Four + birds were in the Cheviots Between Ingram Glidders to Shilmoor on 13th (MJC), three birds were at Harwood Forest on 21st and 30th (MH/TF/JFa) and two birds were at West Hartford on 20th (DM), Burradon on 21st (CDH), East Chevington on 25th (TF/JFa) and at Fieldhead (Longhorsley) on 29th (AB/LB). Single birds were at 21 sites during the month.

A Kestrel at Tynemouith

by Alan Jack

**Merlin** *Falco columbarius*

Single birds were at Fenham Flats (Lindisfarne NNR) on 1st (MH/AA), High Buston (Warkworth) on 16th (JPL et al) and Dunstanburgh Castle on 20th (AJR). A single bird was back on suitable breeding habitat on 28th (TRD/JD).

**Peregrine** *Falco peregrinus*

All sightings involved single birds at Druridge Pools, Gosforth Park NR, Holywell Pond, Horncliffe, Morpeth, Swallow Pond (Wallsend), West Loanend, Whitley Bay and at Widdrington Moor Lake. A female was at a breeding site on 22nd (EC/JSB) and another was at another inland site on 28th (TRD/JD).

**Ring necked Parakeet** *Psittacula krameri*

A county first for the observer as one fed in lakeside trees at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 22nd (DM).

**Great Grey Shrike** *Lanius excubitor*

A first winter bird was watched regularly near Redpath Farm (Harwood Forest) from 14th (ADM/MJC et al) where on 30th it was seen to catch and impale a male Common Lizard (TF/JFa).

The popular Great Grey Shrike at Harwood

by Jonathan Farooqi on 30th March

**Magpie** *Pica pica*

A group of 16 were at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 20th (TB), ten in the observers garden at Fulbeck (Morpeth) on 7th (TD), three at Jesmond Dene on 6th, two at Holywell Dene and daily in an Old Hartley garden with successful nest building by a pair at Kenton.

**Jay** *Garrulus glandarius*

There was a high count of five at Swallow Pond on 8th (SPP), four the peak at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN), three at Fishers Lane (Backworth) on 29th (GPK) with two at Big Waters NWT, Letah Wood (Hexham) and between Newburn and Wylam. Singles were at eight other locations.

**Jackdaw** *Corvus monedula*

An evening roost of 500+ at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN), 300 at Prestwick Carr on 18th (PCF), 50 at Widdrington Village on 7th (JMA) with one to three at Holywell Dene and Jesmond Dene.

**Rook** *Corvus frugilegus*

A peak of 50 at Widdrington Village on 7th (JMA), 20 at Holywell Dene and eight in an Old Hartley Garden on 21st (RJP) with one south at Tynemouth on 20th (DRW). Cramlington Hall had 15 nests and Seaton Burn six on 28th (DM).

**Carrion Crow** *Corvus corone*

Ten at Falstone on 20th, Leighton Hill MOD on 28th and North Shields Jetty on 31st (JMA/JR) with four at Jesmond Dene on 20th (MJCo) and nest building at Longhorsley Moor on 29th (AB/LB). Two flew north at Seaton Sluice on 26th (SSWT) and one visited a Old Hartley Garden on 6th and 30th (RJP).

**Raven** *Corvus corax*

Walks in the Cheviots found seven in 6km Ingram Glidders to Shilmoor on 13th and five in 11km Biddlestone to Bloodybush Edge on 25th (MJC). Two were at Carshope on 6th, Linhope on 20th and Hepple Whitfield on 28th with singles in upland locations at Coanwood Burn, Deadwater Fell, Kidland Lee, St Cuthberts Cave and more unusually at Stamfordham on 29th (EC).



A Raven over Harthope by Chris Barlow

**Goldcrest** *Regulus regulus*

Four migrants at Melkridge on 14th (SJH), three at Bolam Lake on 6th, Grindon Lough on 21st and Bamburgh on 29th (AW/SJH/BRS) with one to two at Killingworth Lake, Prestwick Carr, Holwell Dene and Jesmond Dene.

**Blue Tit** *Cyanistes caeruleus*

Good numbers at Bedlington with 24 at Humford Mill on 10th, 17 at Furnace Bridge on 9th and nine at Bothal Village on 7th (JR). Six were at feeders at Bolam CP on 9th, five at Holywell Dene and Jesmond Dene with one to four at Gosforth, Kenton and Old Hartley.

**Great Tit** *Parus major*

17 at Humford Mill (Bedlington) on 10th and 13 at Bothal Village on 7th (JR), five at Jesmond Dene on 29th (MJCo) with one to four at Bolam CP, Holywell Dene, Furnace Bridge and Old Hartley.

**Coal Tit** *Periparus ater*

On 10th nine were at Humford Mill (Bedlington), seven at Bothal Village on 7th (JR), three at Jesmond Dene on 29th (MJCo) and one to two at Bolam CP, Killingworth Lake and Holywell Dene. A pair regularly at Holy Island during the month was regarded as unusual there for spring (IK).

**Willow Tit** *Poecile montanus*

Three at Lynemouth Dene on 14th (MJC), two in an Old Hartley garden on 24th and one regularly there during the month (RJP), one to two regularly at Big Waters NWT and Prestwick Carr. Singles were regularly at Holywell Dene and Linden Hall (Longhorsley) where singing was noted and at Branton GP, Derwent Reservoir, Dinnington and Linton Ponds.

**Marsh Tit** *Poecile palustris*

Morpeth the stronghold with two at High House Woods on 7th and 11th, High House Lane on 13th and Postern Wood on 21st (ADM/Tf/JFa). Two, one singing, were at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on four dates, Low Cocklaw (Berwick) daily from 21st (BWG) and Thrum Mill (Rothbury) on 16th (TRD/JD).

**Skylark** *Alauda arvensis*

Many singing birds in the Cheviots being amongst 40 in 11km Biddlestone to Bloodybush Edge on 25th and 25 in 6km Ingram Glidders to Shilmoor on 13th and more than 20 at Bewick Moor on 28th (MJC). Ten were at Weetslade Colliery CP on 19th and at Longhorsley Moor on 27th (AW/AB/LB), eight at Camperdown Moor, Grindon Lough and White Hill Farm (Cramlington) with one to three at nine other widely spread localities.

**Shore Lark** *Eremophila alpestris*

A male was present in Alnmouth Dunes from 10th to 26th (AGO *et al*).



**Sand Martin** *Riparia riparia*

First arrivals on 24th with three at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN), two at Big Waters NWT and one at Holywell Pond on 25th (GB/CGK/GPK) with one to four present over water at the above and at Snab Point (Cresswell), QEII CP, and Swallow Pond in the following days. The peak counts were more than 25 at East Chevington on 27th (TF/JFa) and 24 coming to roost at Gosforth Park NR on 28th (NHSN).

**Swallow** *Hirundo rustica*

Singles at Brandon (Breamish Valley) and Big Waters NWT on 27th (IBDa/KDa), East Chevington North Pool and Gosforth Park NR on 28th (ADMc/NHSN).

**House Martin** *Delichon urbica*

An early individual was seen at East Chevington North Pool on 27th (ADMc).

**Long-tailed Tit** *Aegithalos caudatus*

There were counts of eight from Berwick on 2nd (BGW), seven at Furnace Bridge (Bedlington) on 9th and six at Cramlington, Rothbury and Tynemouth. One to four were reported from a further 19 localities, including nest building at Haughton Strother (Humshaugh) on 16th and Ellington from 25th.

**Chiffchaff** *Phylloscopus collybita*

One at Fulbeck (Morpeth) on 6th was almost certainly an over-wintering bird. The first potential migrants were singles at Alnmouth and East Ord on 12th, followed by a singing bird at Linden Hall (where none were recorded during the winter) on 13th; one was at Gosforth Park NR on 17th and a single at Swallow Pond on 17th-18th. A substantial influx occurred during the final week of the month, with ten+ singing males at Branton GP by 30th (MJC) and up to seven at Gosforth Park and Holywell Dene by 31st (NHSN/PCF). Numbers on Holy Island rose from four on 26th to seven on 27th (IK). Five+ singing birds were noted at Berwick Moor on 28th, four at Holywell Dene on 26th and four at Derwent Reservoir on 31st. Counts of three came from Arcot Hall on 25th, Bamburgh on 29th and Howdon on 31st with one to two reported from a further 32 localities from 25th-31st.



A Chiffchaff at Holywell by Alan Jack

**Blackcap** *Sylvia atricapilla*

All reports were considered to be over-wintering birds. Two were in a South Gosforth garden on 1st, with a single there on 28th (MJCo). A female was in an Alnwick garden on 4th, with a male and a female there on 16th (JMA). Another was at North Sunderland on 8th (NR) and a singing male was at Hexham from 27th-29th (AJR).

**Nuthatch** *Sitta europaea*

Eight were noted at Furnace Bridge (Blyth) on 9th (JR) and seven at Holywell Dene on 31st (RJP). Elsewhere up to five were reported from Bolam Lake and four from Humford Mill, Newburn-Wylam and West Moor. A potential breeding pair at Leazes Park (where one bird was prospecting a tree hole) was considered very unusual for this city centre site (GB). Two territories were identified in the Spindleston-Warren Mill area and up to two birds were reported from Bothal, Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Ha'penny Woods (Blyth) and Holywell Dene, with singles noted from three sites in Jesmond Dene, two Cramlington sites, Arcot GC, Kielder Castle, Melkridge and Richardson Dees Park (Wallsend).

**Treecreeper** *Certhia familiaris*

Three were at Chirdon Bridge on 25th (JR) and singles at three localities in Holywell Dene on 31st (RJP). Counts of two came from Bolam Lake, Kielder Castle, Letah Wood (Hexham) and Whitley Chapel with singles at Jesmond Dene, Redmire and Rothbury.

Of particular interest was a bird showing characteristics of the **Northern ssp.** *C.f.familiaris* in the company of migrant Goldcrests at Holy Island (Straight Lonnen) from 26th-27th; this represents the first spring record of Treecreeper for the island (IK).



A Treecreeper on Eddie Crabtree's bird table at Stamfordham

**Wren** *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Seven singing males were at Longhorsley Moor on 27th and six at Longhorsley on 25th (AB/LB). Four were reported from Holywell Dene and two from Furnace Bridge (Bedlington) and Jesmond Dene.



A Wren  
Killingworth  
Chris Barlow

**Starling** *Sturnus vulgaris*

By far the largest concentration was 5,000 (presumably roosting) at Whitchester (Haltwhistle) on 7th, when a further 400 were at Low Acton Farm (Allendale) and 300 at Melkridge (SJH). Elsewhere, 650 were at Prestwick Carr on 18th, 200 at Plenneller Common on 16th and 80-100 at Coanwood Common, Hollin Green (Allendale) and Ridley Common.



**Dipper** *Cinclus cinclus*

A total of eight, including three singing males, were in the Cheviots (Ingram Glidders-Shilmoor) on 13th (MJC), up to four were reported from Holywell Dene, two pairs in Jesmond Dene and three at Weldon Bridge. Two were noted at Bothal, a pair at Hartford Bridge and singles at Furnace Bridge, Ha'penny Woods (Blyth), Melkridge, Morpeth and Rowley Burn. Nest building was reported from Holywell Dene on 3rd and Carey Burn on 25th.

A Dipper

Holywell Dene

Alan Jack

**Ring Ouzel** *Turdus torquatus*

The first of the year was a male at Hawsen Burn on 30th (ADMc).

**Blackbird** *Turdus merula*

There were counts of 14 from Furnace Bridge and Humford Mill (both Bedlington) on 9th and 10th respectively (JR), while 13 were at Bothal Village on 7th and 12 at Prestwick Carr on 12th. Eight were noted in Holywell Dene and up to four in an Old Hartley garden. Nest building was reported from Alnwick on 15th and Kenton on 17th.

**Fieldfare** *Turdus pilaris*

Signs of return passage through the county were evident at the end of the month; 650 at Berwick Moor on 30th was the largest gathering (MJC), followed by 400 at Elsdon and 200 at Otterburn on 28th (JR) and 180 were at Coanwood Burn on 29th. Elsewhere, 100-160 were noted at Doddington, Norham, Ridley Common, Rothbury and Tarsset Bridge, with 70-90 at Biddlestone-Bloody Bush (Cheviots), Derwent Reservoir, Elwick, Hott (North Tyne), Longhorsley and Plenmeller Common. Up to 40 were reported from a further ten localities.



Fieldfares on Bewick Moor on 31st March by Mike Carr

**Song Thrush** *Turdus philomelos*

A gathering of 16 (all together) at Hethpool on 8th was of particular interest (JD). Six were noted at Furnace Bridge (Bedlington) on 9th (JR) and threes were reported from Holywell Dene, Ingram Glidders-Shilmoor and Marden Quarry. Elsewhere one to two were noted at Alnwick Moor, Big Waters, Bolam Lake, Bothal, Ha'penny Woods (Blyth), Jesmond Dene, Shaftoe Crags and West Hartford.



**Redwing** *Turdus iliacus*

The largest flock was 200+ near Capheaton on 22nd (EC/JSB). Gatherings of 60-90 were reported from Elsdon, Hartleyburn Common, Ryal, Stanegate, Swallow Pond and Woolsington Park, while up to 55+ were noted at Gosforth Park NR and 30-40 at Eglingham, Linden Hall and Linton Ponds. Up to 29 were noted at a further 14 localities.

**Mistle Thrush** *Turdus viscivorus*

Six singing males were noted in the Cheviots from Ingram Glidders to Shilmoor (6Km) on 13th (MJC). Counts of three came from Jesmond Dene, Killingworth Lake, Kirkley Hall and Richardson Dees Park (Wallsend) and twos at Berwick (New Mills Wood), Bothal, Leazes Park, Prestwick Carr, Pots Durtrees (MOD) and Spylaw (Simonsides). Single singing birds were noted Bakethin, Deadwater and Fulbeck (Morpeth).

**Robin** *Erithacus rubecula*

Twelve were at Humford Mill (Bedlington) on 10th (JR) and ten were singing at Haughton Strother (Humshaugh) on 14th (MR). There were counts of eight from Furnace Bridge (Bedlington) and Prestwick Carr and six at Bothal Village, with one to two also reported from Bolam Lake, Holy Island, Holywell Dene and Jesmond Dene. An early nest at Gosforth Garden Village held the first egg on 14th, with a complete clutch of five eggs by 19th; five newly hatched young were being fed by 31st (MJC).

**Black Redstart** *Phoenicurus ochruros*

One at Holy Island (Castle lime kilns) on 5th was probably the same over-wintering bird reported in December 2015-January 2016 (IK). Another over-wintering bird at Tynemouth was noted from 13th-25th (DRW).

**Stonechat** *Saxicola rubicola*

Peak coastal counts were four (3m/1f) at Druridge dunes and three (2m/1f) at Chevington Burn on 20th (TD). Two singing males were at Budle Bay throughout the month, while pairs were noted at Bamburgh dunes, Boulmer and Low Newton and twos at Spittal cliffs (Berwick) and Berwick Little Beach. Inland, two pairs were found in the Cheviots between Glidders and Shilmoor (MJC) and two males were in the Hawsen Burn area. Elsewhere up to three were at Prestwick Carr, two at Beanley Moor, Berwick Moor (males) and Harward (pair) and singles at Alnwick Moor, Great Whittington, Longhorsley Moor and Ryal.

A Stonechat at St. Mary's by Alan Jack

**Wheatear** *Oenanthe oenanthe*

The first of the year was at Backworth on 29th (GPK).

**Duncock** *Prunella modularis*

A total of nine birds were seen at Prestwick Carr on 9th (PCF). Twos were in Holywell and Jesmond Denes during the month.

**House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus*

35 were at garden feeders at Marden Estate throughout the month, with 20 noted at Battlesteads on 31st and six on feeders in Tynemouth on 7th(ASJ/CB).

**Tree Sparrow** *Passer montanus*

Around 50 were at Low Cocklaw on 31st and 30 on several dates in Chugdon Wood(BGS/TB). 16 was the month's maximum count on 16th at Haughton Strother(MR). One to five were at eight further sites.

A Tree Sparrow

Stonewell

Chris Barlow



**Grey Wagtail** *Motacilla cinerea*

Six were noted in 6km between Ingram and Shillmoor on 13th (MJC). Two pairs were at Derwent Reservoir on 31st (IK). Seven birds were back on territory in Upper Coquetdale on 13th (JR). One to three were at fourteen further sites during the month.

**Pied Wagtail** *Motacilla yarrellii*

16 were at Haughton Strother on 28th with 15+ at Gosforth Park throughout the month. Ten were at Q.E.11 Lake and at Linden Hall on 14th and 6th respectively. One to four were at ten other locations.

**White Wagtail** *Motacilla alba*

Six were observed at Mill Farm (Berwick) on 19th. Three at Cresswell on 30th and two at Lynemouth Flash on 1st. Singles were seen at Humshaugh, Cresswell and Branton during the month.

**Meadow Pipit** *Anthus pratensis*

Counts of 30 birds were made at Northumberlandia (Cramlington) on 8th and at Stewartshiel (Otterburn Ranges) on 28th (STH/JR). 25 including singing birds were observed in 11km of Cheviot Hills between Biddlestone and Bloody Bush Edge on 25th (MJC). One to 11 were at six further sites.



A Meadow Pipit at Branton GPs by Chris Barlow

**Rock Pipit** *Anthus petrosus*

Eight were at St Mary's on 15th, with two *ssp. Litoralis* "Scandinavian" birds were present on 17th (ASJ/MHS).

Four were at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) all month (IJ/ASJ). Single "Scandinavian" birds were at East Chevington on 30th and Fenham Le Moor on 15th. (TRD/JD).

**Brambling** *Fringilla montifringilla*

A single in a Rothbury garden on 17th was the sole sighting of the month (JD).

**Chaffinch** *Fringilla coelebs*

Around 40 were seen at Elsdon on 19th (JR). 15 were at Big Waters feeding station on 6th (GB). Elsewhere, one to six were at seven other locations.

**Bullfinch** *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Eight pairs at Longhorsley was a good count on 3rd (AB/LB). Four pairs were noted in Holywell Dene on several dates during the month and six nearby on garden feeders at Old Hartley (ASJ/RJP). Six were also in a Rothbury garden daily during March (TRD/JD). Five were also seen in Holywell Dene on 6th. One to four noted at 16 other sites including unusually, a female in a Holy island garden on 10th (IK).

**Greenfinch** *Chloris chloris*

Eight at Camperdown on 12th and at Kielder Castle on 25th were the month's largest counts (AW). Seven fed at feeders in a Linden Hall garden on 20th (NFO). One to three were noted at four further sites.



**Linnet** *Carduelis canabina*

A feeding flock of 120 was at Big Waters on 6th (GB). 45 were seen at East Holywell on 29th (MNC). About 30 were at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 31st (BWG) and 20 were at West Moor on 26th (AW). 15 were seen at Northumberlandia (Cramlington) on 8th (STH).

**Twite** *Carduelis flavirostris*

A flock of 70 at Mount Carmel (Norham) on 6th was the month's only report (BWG).

**Lesser Redpoll** *Carduelis caberet*

Five were at Rothbury feeding on garden niger seeds on several dates. (TRD/JD). Three were also at garden feeders in Gosforth Garden village from 22nd onwards (MJC). Three were noted displaying at Slaley on 17th (IK). A single was at Ellington on 26th (TB).

**Crossbill** *Loxia curvirostra*

15 were watched at Cragside on 27th (MJC). On 17th, 12 were at Winnows Hill (Slaley) including several singing males (IK). Seven were at Harward on 22nd and six at Kielder Castle on 25th and five at Swallowship Wood on 30th. Three flew S over Gosforth Garden Village on 23rd. Two were noted at Backworth on 29th and singles were at Swallow Pond and Beanley Wood.

**Goldfinch** *Carduelis carduelis*

40 roosted at Wallsend Metro Station on 4th (CGK). 15 birds were at Prestwick Carr on 11th (PCF). 14 were at Furnace Bridge, Blyth on 9th (JR). Noted as common, in pairs at Holywell Dene and nearby waggonways during the month (ASJ). 12 were at Sandyford (Bolam) on 9th and a pair was at Crooked Lonnen (Holy Island) on 17th (JMA).

**Siskin** *Carduelis spinus*

60+ were counted (two flocks) on 1st at Ha'penny Woods, Blyth (LJM). Birds were at garden feeders at Fulbeck (Morpeth) all month with a maximum of 15 (TD). 15 also at Battlesteads (Wark) on 31st. 11 at Shankhouse Bridge (Cramlington) on 6th (CB/LJM). One to ten were at ten further sites including garden feeders at two Gosforth gardens.



A Siskin at a Gosforth garden feeder by Mike Carr

**Snow Bunting** *Plectrophenax nivalis*

The sole report was of two at Cocklawburn Beach on 12th (BWG).

**Yellowhammer** *Emberiza citrinella*

A good count in stubble of 35 at Longhorsley on 29th had increased from 15 earlier in the month(AB/LB). 15 were also at Low Cocklaw(Berwick) on 31st and 12 at another Berwick site, Askew's Walk on 2nd(BWG). Nine were at Chugdon Wood on 28th (TB). One to four were at another seven sites.



A Yellowhammer at Cresswell Pond  
Janet Dean on 17th March

**Reed Bunting** *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Six were at Westmoor on 19th and at St Mary's on 20th(AW/ASJ). Two were at Holywell Pond during the month, and the first returning males in Upper Coquetdale were at Fullhope with two noted on 6th(ASJ/JR). Two also at Howdon on 20th and 31st(CB).

**ESCAPES, HYBRIDS AND BIRDS OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN****Escapes****Muscovy Duck** *Cairina moschata*

Single at Bothal Pond on 27th (TF / JFa)

**Hybrids****Canada Goose x Greylag Goose** *Branta canadensis* x *Anser anser*

Singles at Bothal Pond on 26th (TF / JFa) and at Marden Quarry on 13th and 27th (KWY).

**Aythya hybrid** *Aythya* sp

A female was noted at Killingworth Lake on 5th resembling Scaup (GB).

**Herring Gull x Lesser Black-backed Gull** *Larus argentatus* x *fuscus*

One of this probable parentage was noted at Swallow Pond on 8th (SPP).

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Bamburgh Ringing Society, Berwick Wildlife Group, Hauxley Ringing Station, Natural History Society of Northumbria, North Northumberland Bird Club, Seaton Sluice Watch Tower.



## Apologies for any accidental omissions

### BULLETIN COMPILATION AND PRODUCTION

This bulletin was compiled by Graeme Bowman (Mute Swan to Ruddy Duck), Steve Laing (Red Grouse to Black-necked Grebe), Trevor Blake (Honey-buzzard to Crane), Steve Holliday (Avocet to Godwit), Ian Forsyth (Turnstone to Skua), Eddie Crabtree (Puffin to Great Black-backed Gull), Tim Dean (Escapes, Hybrids and Unknown Origin, List of Contributors, Highlights), Peter Fletcher (Feral Pigeon to Red-rumped Swallow), Mike Richardson (Cetti's Warbler to Pied Flycatcher), Alan Jack (Dunnock to Corn Bunting), Kathy Evans (WeBS Coastal Counts) and Steve Holliday (WeBS Inland Counts).

Thanks to David Sanders of NNBC for providing data.

Mail distribution by Paul Stewart.

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### RECORD SUBMISSION

Please email [ntbcorg@gmail.com](mailto:ntbcorg@gmail.com) for a copy of the standard spreadsheet and other details.

Location names and grid references: Please use of standard location names and include grid references as this greatly increases the value of records in subsequent analyses. A 1km square grid reference is the ideal e.g. NY8067 for Grindon Lough, but 2km square references (tetrads) are also acceptable e.g. NY86D in this case. A list of localities and their tetrad grid references (tetrad/Locality List) can be downloaded from the 'Resources & Downloads' section of the Club website at <http://www.ntbc.org.uk> – the use of these names, wherever possible, would be highly appreciated.

Could club members ensure they to submit records direct to NTBC rather than just Birdtrack. There may be an assumption by some members this happens automatically. We do not want to miss records.

### PHOTOGRAPHS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Please keep submitting your articles, photographs, sketches and illustrations for the bulletin. Thanks again to those who have supplied the excellent photographs. Please send to Steve Barrett at [NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com](mailto:NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com)

It is preferable if you re-size your photos before sending and a suggested size is 640 x 480 pixels. Please ensure you include the following information with your submissions: name, species, date taken, locality.

Photographs will not be used elsewhere without the photographer's permission.

### MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Annual membership costs £10 for a junior, £30 for an individual, and £32 for a family.

For membership enquiries please contact [ntbc@jobentley.plus.com](mailto:ntbc@jobentley.plus.com)

Membership subscriptions were due at the beginning of October. If you internet bank you can pay online: please include your name in the ref. It is helpful if you email me to let me know when you've made the transfer [ntbc@jobentley.plus.com](mailto:ntbc@jobentley.plus.com)

If you decide to set up a standing order please date the first payment at least a fortnight from your posting date to allow time to process with the bank. You can also set up your standing order directly with your bank if you wish; just let me know.

Finally, if you know anyone who might like to join NTBC please pass on the club information - new members are always welcome.

**Jo Bentley - Hon Treasurer**

### NTBC WEB SITE

The Club website is an excellent resource for all interested in birds in the north-east. There are numerous interesting sections, including a photograph gallery, site information and trip reports together with extensive reference information for birding in our area. Please submit any new content for the website to the main club email address.

### NTBC SIGHTINGS PAGE

The Sightings Page contains current reports by members. Access is from the NTBC website and an email notification is available for new postings. Members need to submit a request to be added to the website, specifying the email address they wish to post from before they can submit sightings to [ntbcorg@gmail.com](mailto:ntbcorg@gmail.com)

## INLAND WeBS COUNTS: NORTH HUMBERLAND

Version: Interim

Year: 2016  
 Month: MARCH

[illegible]



# Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

<http://www.ntbc.org.uk/>

Bulletin 2015 No 4

MONTHLY SUMMARY APRIL 2016

31st May 2016



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WeBS inland

WeBS Coastal

Inland WeBS counters needed

BIRDS IN NORTHUMBRIA – Quick Reference

## CLASSIFIED LIST HIGHLIGHTS

Bewick's Swan

Whooper Swan

Smew

Bittern

Water Rail

Crane

Greenshank

Long-billed Dowitcher

Great Skua

Iceland Gull

Wryneck

Ring-necked Parakeet

Great Grey Shrike

Hooded Crow

Ring Ouzel

Pied Flycatcher

One flew N at Holy Island with Whoopers on 10th.

Large count of 152 flying N at Holy Island on 1st.

Single redhead at Tughall Pool on 20th.

One at Gosforth Park through to mid-month.

Survey at Gosforth park revealed seven pairs and two individuals.

Two over Holystone calling on 20th.

Single at Humshaugh on 28th.

The first-winter assumed summer plumage at Cresswell Pond, until 27th.

One at Whitley Bay on 24th.

Several sightings up to 17th.

One in an Alnmouth garden on 21st.

Three in Ouseburn area, Newcastle on 18th.

One in Harwood Forest again until 3rd.

Singles at Whitley Bay and Cresswell Pond.

Flock of 11 in Harthope Valley on 21st.

Early record of seven at Letah Wood on 21st.



Greylag Geese on Bewick Moor with Cheviot under snow

By Mike Carr on 17th April

## INDOOR MEETINGS

NTBC indoor meetings are held at Northern Rugby Club, McCracken Park, Great North Road, Newcastle, NE3 2DT starting at 7.00pm and generally finish between 9.00pm-9.30pm. The next meeting is after the summer on September 8th.

## CLASSIFIED LIST

### Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

Peak gatherings were 136 at the Tweed Estuary on 8th (MHu), 54 at Killingworth Lake on 9th (LJM), 51 at Capheaton on 3rd (STE), and 12-19 at Bolam Lake (CDB), Howdon (CB) and Shortridge Hall (JMA). One to five at ten further sites included nesting birds at Bothal Pond, Holy Island Lough and Woodhorn Flashes. A pair accompanied four juveniles at Hauxley Reserve on 19th (HRS).



A Mute Swan evicts a Gadwall at Holy Island Lough  
by Mike Carr on 1st April

### Bewick's Swan *Cygnus columbianus*

One, amongst 28 Whooper Swans, flew N at Holy Island on 10th (MJC).



A Bewick Swan with three Whooper "cousins" at Holy Island, by Mike Carr on 10th April



**Whooper Swan** *Cygnus cygnus*

Northerly movement was evident on 1st, when a total of 152 in three groups flew over Holy Island (MJC), 56 at Haughton Strother GP (MR), and 45-50 at Creswell Pond (ADM/JC/EC) and East Chevington (MH). Passage to N/NW also involved 30-35 at St Mary's (SPP), 30 at East Chevington (ADM/JC) and 28 at Holy Island on 10th (MJC), a total of 36 at Derwent Reservoir on 3rd-4th (IFo), and two to seven at Creswell Pond (ADM/JC) and Harper's Heugh on 3rd (MSH). Counts of 28 came from Airy Holm Reservoir (IFo) and Haughton Strother GP (MR) on 3rd, ten to 20 at Creswell, Derwent Reservoir and Druridge between 5th-10th, and two to six at Branton GP and East Chevington. The last of the month was one at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 11th (SR).

**Pink-footed Goose** *Anser brachyrhynchus*

Northerly movement involved 68-140 at East Ord (MHu), High Hauxley (MH), Holy Island (MJC) and Prestwick Carr (PCF) on 10th, 70 at St Mary's on 15th (MSH), and 65 at Druridge Pools on 17th (TF/JFa). Numbers in the Budle Bay-Harper's Heugh area varied from 400 on 3rd (MSH), 500 on 5th (DGB) and 150 on 19th (MSH), 30 were at Low Newton scrape on 8th (TRD/JD), and one to six at Bothal Pond, Haughton Strother GP and Hauxley Reserve on various dates throughout the month.

**White-fronted Goose** *Anser flavirostris*

Eurasian *albifrons* race birds involved two at Holywell Pond on 7th-8th (ASJ/SPP), while two un-raced birds were at Hauxley Reserve on 19th (HRS).

March bulletin correction Bothal Pond on 25th March should read 2 European White Fronted Geese (not Greenland).

**Greylag Goose** *Anser anser*

Moderate numbers included peaks of 49 at Harper's Heugh (near Budle Bay) on 3rd (MSH), 45 at Bothal Pond on 8th (TF/JFa), 45 at Haughton Strother GP on 22nd (MR), 45 at Hauxley Reserve on 19th (HRS), and 35-40 at Hoppen Kiln (MSH) and Woodhorn Flashes (CDH). Nine to 13 were at Cocklawburn, East Chevington and Holywell Dene, and one to two at/over Harthope Valley, Hedgeley GP, Howdon, Humshaugh, Linton Ponds, Milkwell and Yarrow Slake. Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Derwent Reservoir	6	33 (9,6,6,5,5,2)	IFo. First brood of 6 on 18th, rest from 25th-27th
Haughton Strother GP	3	15 (5,5,5)	MR. On 22nd and 24th
Hulne Park, Alnwick	1	8	RB/MB. On 24th
Marden Quarry	1	5	KWY. On 24th



A Greylag Goose at Bewick Moor on 17th April by Mike Carr

**Canada Goose** *Branta canadensis*

Peak counts were 67 at Hauxley Reserve on 19th (HRS), 44 at Linton Ponds on 22nd (CDH), 23-32 at Bolam Lake (CDB), Bothal Pond (TD), Hedgeley GP (DM) and Swallow Pond (DM), and ten to 18 at Banks' Pond (Dinnington), Midgeholme (plus two nests; SW) and Newcastle Leazes Park. Two to three were at East Chevington, the Tweed Estuary and West Ord. Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Bank's Pond, Dinnington	1	8	PCF. On 25th.

**Barnacle Goose** *Branta leucopsis*

24 flew SW at Holy Island on 29th (ADM), eight were at Harper's Heugh (near Budle Bay) on 3rd (MSH), and one sat on the sea off St Mary's on 21st (AC).

**Brent Goose** *Branta bernicla*

Un-raced birds involved eight at Fenham-le-Moor on 4th (JDL) and 43 there on 16th (JDL), 12 at Beal on 7th (DGB), and one at Holy Island on 17th (SR).

**Shelduck** *Tadorna tadorna*

Largest counts were 60 at the Blyth Estuary on 3rd (LJM), 26 at Howdon on 1st (CB), 16 at Hauxley Reserve on 19th (HRS), and ten to 11 at Castle Island (CDH) and Cresswell Pond (MSH). Four to eight were at Backworth, Greenlaw and Holywell Ponds, Elswick and Hedgeley GP and one to two at Bothal Pond, Haughton Strother GP, Lynemouth Flash, Prestwick Carr and West Ord.



Above: Shelduck and below: a drake Wigeon; both from Howdon Wetland by Colin Bradshaw

**Mandarin** *Aix galericulata*

Single pairs were on the River North Tyne at Glen Ridley on 27th (JR) and on the River Wansbeck at Low Angerton on 24th (IRD). Two were also at Redmire bridge (near Tarsset) on 27th (JR).

**Wigeon** *Anas penelope*

107 were at Derwent Reservoir on 4th (IFo), 48 at Bothal Pond on 1st (CDH) falling to two by 23rd (TD), 40 at Druridge Pools on 3rd (TD) dropping to ten by 13th (MSH), 32-38 at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN) and Grindon Lough (PRM), and ten to 20 at Hauxley Reserve, Low Newton and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. One to six were also at Branton and Hedgeley GP, Castron, Capheaton Lake, Holywell Pond and Howdon.





**Gadwall** *Anas strepera*

Peak counts came from Bothal Pond, with 39 on 1st (CDH), Hauxley Reserve, with 18 on 19th (HRS), and Castle Island, with 13 on 1st (CDH). Ten were at Caistron (JD) and Lynemouth Flash (MSH), six to eight at Howdon, Linton Ponds and St Mary's Wetland, and three to four at Arcot and Swallow Ponds, Capheaton Lake and Druridge Pools. One to two also visited Branton and Hedgeley GP, Bank's Pond (Dinnington), Cresswell and Holywell Pond, East Chevington, Haughton Strother GP, West Hartford and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.



A Pair of Gadwall  
Ladyburn Lake  
by Chris Barlow on 6th April

**Teal** *Anas crecca*

Four flew N at Seaton Sluice on 14th (SSWT). 132 at Howdon on 1st dropped to one by 30th (CB). Other peak counts were 60 at Budle Bay on 19th (MSH), 57 at Grindon Lough on 20th (PRM), 20-24 at Druridge Pools (TD), Elswick, Low Newton (TD) and West Hartford (STH), and ten to 17 at Bothal Pond, Castle Island, Gosforth Park NR, Hoppen Kin and Lynemouth Flash. Six to eight were also at Capheaton Lake, Juniper and West Ord, and two to four at Arcot Pond, Hauxley Reserve, Ladyburn Lake and the Tweed Estuary.

**Mallard** *Anas platyrhynchos*

20-21 were at Ladyburn Lake (JMA) and Newcastle Leazes Park (DM), and ten to 17 were at Bothal Pond, Hauxley Reserve, the Tweed Estuary and Tynemouth Lake. Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Gosforth Park NR	2+	17+	NHSN/MJC/IK. Including brood of 14 on 10th
Derwent Reservoir	2	25 (13,12)	IFo. Brood of 12 on 11th and brood of 13 on 25th
Holywell Dene	1	10	RJP
Capheaton Lake	1	7	STE. On 20th.
Swallow Pond	1	7	IF. On 19th.
Arcot Pond	1	6	LJM. On 24th.
Whittle Dene Reservoirs	1	6	SR. On 25th
Newcastle Leazes Park	1	1	MH/DM. Tiny young on 11th.

**Pintail** *Anas acuta*

13 at Lindisfarne NNR on 15th included six drakes (MH/AA). Two pairs were at Cresswell Pond on 7th (DLo), three birds at Druridge Pools on 9th (TF/JFa) and one to two regularly there between 3rd-22nd (TD/TRD/JD/MSH).

**Garganey** *Anas querquedula*

Three (two drakes) were at Swallow Pond on 2nd and remained until 22nd, with a pair remaining until 28th (GPK *et al.*). One was at Gosforth Park NR on 4th (NHSN). More unusual were two at Budle Bay on 24th (AJ).

**Shoveler** *Anas clypeata*

Druridge Pools attracted a peak of 21 on 13th (MSH) and ten to 13 on several dates between 3rd-22nd (TD/TRD/JD). Other peak counts included 11 (eight drakes) at Low Newton on 17th (TD), and three to five at Arcot, Bothal and Cresswell Ponds, and Holy Island Lough. One to two visited Hauxley Reserve, Low Newton scrape, Swallow Pond and West Hartford. A pair at Derwent Reservoir on 27th was unusual in being very scarce at this site (IFo).

**Pochard** *Aythya ferina*

The vast majority of reports came from the south eastern quarter of the county, with peaks of 23 (18 drakes) at Swallow Pond on 18th (IJ), ten (nine drakes) at Gosforth Park (NHSN), nine at Arcot Pond on 2nd (STH), and four at Bothal Pond (IFo). Singles were also noted at Bank's and Holywell Ponds, and Capheaton and Killingworth Lakes.

**Tufted Duck** *Aythya fuligula*

Highest counts involved 72 at Killingworth Lake on 6th (MSH), 45 at Haughton Strother GP on 12th (MR), 40 at Capheaton Lake on 3rd (STE), 32-36 at Bothal Pond (IFo) and QEII CP Lake (IFo), 20-24 at Holywell Pond and Ladyburn Lake, and 15 at Woodhorn Flashes. Four to nine were also at Derwent Reservoir, Grindon Lough, Hauxley Reserve, Howdon, Jesmond Dene, Linton Ponds and Lynemouth Flash.

**Scaup** *Aythya marila*

Single ducks were at East Chevington on 2nd and 17th (TF/JFa), and Killingworth Lake on 9th (GB).

**Eider** *Somateria mollissima*

106 were at Cocklawburn on 11th (MHu), 91 at the Blyth Estuary on 10th (LJM), 90 at Stag Rocks on 3rd (BRS), 18 at Berwick North Shore, and two to nine at the Tweed Estuary and Whitley Bay.

**Long-tailed Duck** *Clangula hyemalis*

30 were at Stag Rocks on 3rd (BRS), two at Berwick North Shore on 6th (MHu), two at Cullercoats on 16th (IJ), and one at Seaton Sluice on 28th (DLo).

**Common Scoter** *Melanitta nigra*

Low numbers included 60 at Holy Island on 17th (SR), 49 at Stag Rocks on 3rd (SR) and 20 there on 6th (JDL), and 12 at Cocklawburn (MHu). Five were also at Meadow Haven (Berwick) but more unusual was a pair on fresh water at Widdrington Moor Lake on 10th (JL).

**Velvet Scoter** *Melanitta fusca*

One was at Stag Rocks on 6th (JDL).

**Goldeneye** *Bucephala clangula*

Peak numbers were 19 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 9th (SR), 19 at Branton GP on 17th (IBDa/KBDa), 12 at the Tweed Estuary on 8th (MHu), and ten at Capheaton Lake on 3rd (STE). Six to seven were at Bothal Pond, Caistron and the Tweed Estuary, and three to four at Arcot, Cresswell and Swallow Ponds, and East Chevington. One to two also visited Bolam Lake, Castle Island, Hauxley Reserve and QEII CP Lake.

**Smew** *Mergellus albellus*

A female was briefly at Tughall pool on 20th (DS).

**Red-breasted Merganser** *Mergus serrator*

Three moved N and two S at Seaton Sluice on 15th (SSWT). Budle Bay held 15 on 30th (GPK), 11 were at the Blyth Estuary on 10th (LJM), five to six at Boulmer (TRD/JD), Castle Island (CDH) and Holy Island (ADM), and three to four at Druridge Pools, off Hadston, Stag Rocks and the Tweed Estuary. One to two were also at Berwick North Shore, Cresswell Pond, East Chevington north pool and Hauxley Reserve. A drake was on the River Blyth at Furnace Bridge (Bedlington) on 20th (JR).

**Goosander** *Mergus merganser*

One flew N and two S at Seaton Sluice on 14th-15th (SSWT). Counts were 21 at Horncliffe on 27th (JDL), 20 at the Tweed Estuary on 8th (MHu), seven to eight at Corbridge (AJH) and New Water Haugh (MHu), and three to five at Bygate, Caistron, Dilston, Harthope Valley and West Ord. One to two were also at Branton GP, Bywell, Chirdon Bridge, Derwent Res., Devil's Water, East Chevington, Humshaugh, Snabdaugh Farm, Swallowship Wood, Warden, Wark and Yarrow Slake.

**Red-legged Partridge** *Alectoris rufa*

Six in the lower Harthope Valley on 10th was the highest count (DM/STH) with one to three seen at Crow Hall Farm (Holywell Dene), East Cramlington, Heighley Gate, Middleton Hall and Rothbury.

**Red Grouse** *Lagopus lagopus*

On the moors at Harwood Shield they were "abundant, seemingly everywhere" on 9th, with a minimum of 100 birds seen (JL). The only other records were from the Harthope Valley with ten at the Hawsen Burn on 10th (DM/STH) and two on 21st (TRD/JD).

**Black Grouse** *Tetrao tetrix*

The only record was three males displaying to three females at Westburnhope (Hexhamshire Common) (STE).



**Grey Partridge** *Perdix perdix*

Four were present at Prestwick Carr on 5th (PCF) and two pairs were at Backworth on 22nd (CGK). One to three were at Acomb, Cocklawburn, Derwent Reservoir, East Holywell, Holywell Pond, Linden Hall, Three Horse Shoes Pub (Bebside), Todridge and Westburnhope.

**Pheasant** *Phasianus colchicus*

A visit to Blagdon Hall produced 11 on 23rd (BBS). Eight were at Acomb on 16th (CDB) and three were present at Eachwick on 1st and at Holywell Dene throughout the month.

**Red-throated Diver** *Gavia stellata*

The monthly total from Seaton Sluice Watch Tower was six N and six S in 16 hrs between 4th – 18th (SSWT). Eight were at Cocklawburn on 28th (MHu) and three were at Meadow Haven (Berwick) on 26th. One to two were at several other coastal localities.

**Fulmar** *Fulmarus glacialis*

140 per hour went past Berwick Pier on 26th (MHu). 20 were at Cullernose Point (Craster) on 8th (TRD/JD). Breeding sites held 20 pairs at Whitley Bay Cliffs on 14th (JMA), four pairs on ledges at Snab Point (Cresswell) on 3rd (JL) and Dunstanburgh Castle on 17th (TD), with three pairs at Cullercoats on 14th.



A Fulmar glides past Cullernose Point on 6th April by Tim Dean

**Gannet** *Morus bassanus*

A significant movement of 1200 per hour N flew past Berwick Pier during the early afternoon of 26th (MHu). The highest count during the month at Seaton Sluice was 675 N, all adults, in one hour on 16th (SSWT). Other movements were 200 N past Cullernose Point (Craster) on 8th (TRD/JD), 80 at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) on 24th (IJ), 57 N past Snab Point in half an hour on the morning of 22nd, and 40 N at Newton Point on 8th. One to 20 were recorded at a further several coastal locations.

**Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo*

The low-tide roost at New Water Haugh (River Tweed) peaked at 53 on 23rd and 11 were present during a WeBS count at Berwick North Shore on 6th (MHu). One to three were at several other localities including a juvenile at Leazes park (Newcastle) during a WeBS count on 11th (DM). One immature bird of the continental 'sinensis' race was at Holywell Pond NR on 21st (MSH).

**Shag** *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

At Seaton Sluice this species continues to be scarce with a monthly total of just one bird flying N on 16th (SSWT). Three pairs were present at Dunstanburgh Castle on 17th (TD) and four were present during a WeBS count at Berwick North Shore on 6th (MHu). Two were at Cullernose Point on 8th and also on the Tyne at Tynemouth on 25th.

**Bittern** *Botaurus stellaris*

The remaining single bird at Gosforth Park NR was not seen after mid-month (NHSN).

**Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta*

Cresswell Pond NWT had a peak of four on 23rd (CDB) and the highest number seen at Lindisfarne NNR was three on 15th (MH/AA). One to two were at many other locations including Amble Weir, Branton GP, Budle Bay, Castle Island, East Chevington, East Sleekburn, Hadston, Hauxley NWT and Yarrow Slake (River Tweed).

**Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea*

Four were at Holy Island on 12th (ADM) and three were at nests at Yarrow Haugh (Tweedmouth) on 14th (BWG). Three were also at Prestwick Carr on 16th (PCF). One to two were at Amble Weir, Berwick North Shore (WeBS), Capheaton, Hauxley NWT, Holywell Dene, Linton Ponds, Morpeth, Valley Park (Cramlington) and the Wansbeck Estuary.



A grey Heron fishes at Howdon Wetland  
by Colin Bradshaw

**Little Grebe** *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Arcot Pond held the highest number with a maximum of seven present on 17th (LJM) and Swallow Pond peaked at six on 2nd (GPK). Five were at Caistron on 9th and totals of four were at Capheaton, Gosforth Park NR and Longhoughton Quarry. One to three were at 12 other potential breeding locations.

**Great Crested Grebe** *Podiceps Cristatus*

A good number of reports from suitable breeding sites included peak counts of eight at Derwent Reservoir on 27th (IFo), seven - three pairs and a singleton - at East Chevington on 1st (MH) and four at Haughton Strother GP (Humshaugh), Killingworth Lake and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. Elsewhere, one to three birds were at Airy Holm Reservoir, Arcot Pond, Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), Branton GP, Caistron, Druridge Pools and on the River Tyne at Tynemouth.

**Slavonian Grebe** *Podiceps auritus*

At least two, coming into full breeding plumage, lingered into April – one at Holy Island Harbour on 10th (IK) and another at Stag Rocks until at least 15th (MH/AA).

**Black-necked Grebe** *Podiceps nigrocollis*

Birds returned to a site in the south east of the county with a single bird on 5th, a second arriving on 12th, and the total increasing to four by 24th (SPP/AJ/GPK/CB *et al.*) with the first display observed on 18th (SPP).



**Red Kite** *Milvus Milvus*

On 2nd a single bird was seen over the observer's house at Milkwell (Corbridge) (RB/MB). On the 18th singles were at Haughton Strother GPs (Humshaugh) (NR), High Brunton flying SE (JWP) and at South Snods (Allensford) on 25th (IFo).

**Marsh Harrier** *Circus aeruginosus*

Once again most of the sightings came from East Chevington with three birds on several dates involving two different males and two different females (MH/AA *et al.*). Single birds were noted at Gosforth Park on 17th, 18th and 30th (NHSN), Prestwick Carr on 20th (*per* PCF) and at Big Waters on 22nd (SPP).

**Goshawk** *Accipiter gentilis*

Two birds were at Harwood Forest on 28th (STE), single birds were also seen at Coupland on 15th (JD), at Kielder on 19th (MH/AA) and one in the Harthope Valley on 21st (TRD/JD). More unusual was a bird which flew slowly N over a housing estate in Chapel House (Newcastle) in fog and drizzle (MH).

**Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter nisus*

Three birds were at Heddon-on-the-Wall on 19th (MH/AA) and at Swallowship Wood (Hexham) on 30th (AJH) and a pair were at Holywell Dene on 14th. Single birds were seen at Alnwick, Beacon Point (Newbiggin), Cramlington, Cullercoats, Eachwick, Fawdon (Newcastle), Harthope Valley, Haughton Castle, Leamington Hall, St Mary's Island, Tynemouth and West Hartford.

An interesting report from Heddon. "On 13th April a female sparrowhawk was seen with a kill at the bottom of our garden. Whilst on the ground it was mobbed by two magpies and was trapped between a hedge and the garden shed. What was surprising was the ferocity and daring of the attack, with the magpies getting very close and using their beaks - one landed briefly on the Sparrowhawk's back. We observed this incident for about ten minutes until the sparrowhawk escaped". (RY&MY).

**Common Buzzard** *Buteo buteo*

Four birds were at East Chevington on 3rd (IF), Prestwick Carr on 7th (PCF), Blagdon Hall on 23rd and at Simonside on 30th (ASJ). Three birds were noted at Acomb, Beacon Hill (Longhorsley), Prestwick Carr and at West Hartford. One or two birds were recorded at 12 sites.

**Osprey** *Pandion haliaetuss*

At Leaplish (Kielder) on 22nd two birds were present for 45 minutes. A bird flew straight through N at Bakethin on 3rd (CGK/GPK/PS *et al.*). Other single birds were at Branton GPs on 6th (IBDa/KDa), Kielder Dam on 9th (PRM), Wark (near Coldstream) on 11th, Old Berwick on 16th (IBDa/KDa), one flew N at Humshaugh on 17th (SW), one flew NW at Derwent Reservoir on 18th (IFo), Humshaugh on 28th (MR) and a bird caught a fish in the River Tweed at West Ord (Berwick) before flying off NW (MHu).

**Water Rail** *Rallus aquaticus*

At Gosforth Park NR in April a survey mid-month revealed at least seven pairs and two individuals and early breeding with two young chicks seen on 26th (NHSN). Cresswell Pond had a peak count of three on 4th (ADMc) two present on 5th (STH/IFo) and singles on 5th & 9th (TRD/JD/ADMc). A bird was heard squealing at West Hartford on 8th (STH).

**Moorhen** *Gallinula chloropus*

12 birds were at Castle Island on 1st (CDH) and 10 were at Hauxley NWT on 19th (HRS). Seven at Bothal Pond on 23rd included one bird with five small young (TD), six birds were Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Leazes Park (Newcastle) and Hedgeley GPs (DM/STH). One to five birds were at Arcot Pond, Bolam Lake, Grindon Lough, Holy Island Lough, Holywell Dene & Rising Sun CP (Wallsend).

**Coot** *Fulica atra*

28 birds at Bothal Pond on 10th (TD) was the highest count this month, followed by 11 birds at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 1st (DM) and 10 birds at Arcot Pond on 6th (DM). One to eight birds were at Arcot Pond, Bolam Lake, Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Grindon Lough, Hauxley NWT, Howdon, Leazes Park (Newcastle), and at Rising Sun CP (Wallsend).

**Crane** *Grus grus*

Two birds flying high, with one calling to the other were near River Coquet (Holystone) on 20th.

**Avocet** *Recurvirostra avosetta*

Birds were present at Cresswell Pond throughout the month, with highest counts between two and six and a peak of ten on 15th (MSH). Other high counts at Cresswell Pond were of seven on 5th (MSH) and of eight on 17th (TF/JFa). There were records of between five to nine birds in the Blyth Estuary with the peak count of nine on 5th (MHP). Castle Island had a sighting of three on the 1st (CDH) and Bothal Pond saw three birds fly over twice on 10th without landing (TD).

**Oystercatcher** *Haematopus ostralegus*

Reports of suggested breeding came from Hedgeley GP on 10th, when three pairs were reported (DM/STH), while two reports of single pairs came from Beacon Hill and the High School in Cramlington, both on 23rd (DM).

The largest count was of ca. 250 non-breeders that were regularly seen throughout April at Holy Island-St Cuthbert's Island (IK). Other large counts along the coast were of 45 at Cullercoats on 22nd (KWY), 44 at Hauxley NWT on 19th (HRS) and 24 at Cresswell Pond on 24th (MSH), 20 at St Mary's on 14th (JMA) and 14 at Tynemouth Point on 13th (JMA). Other, smaller coastal counts were made at Berwick North Shore and Whitley Bay (Rockcliffe)/Cullercoats, as well as the Tweed Estuary and Black Middens.

The largest inland count was of 64 at Derwent Reservoir on 1st (IFo), while 38 made up a pre-breeding gathering in a flooded field near Wooler on 8th (AJ) and 12 were seen near Hornccliffe on 19th (MHu).

Smaller inland counts came from Bothal Pond, Carey Burn, Castle Island, Corbridge (Milkwell), Elswick Wharf, Kielder Dam, Linton Ponds, Prestwick Carr, and Wark-on-Tyne.



An Oystercatcher and a Black-tailed Godwit  
Big Waters island  
18th April  
by Graeme Bowman

**Golden Plover** *Pluvialis apricaria*

Spring passage was particularly evident in East Allendale (in fields between Spartylea and Meadow Cottage), where an exceptional estimated minimum of 1,200 "northern" birds in breeding plumage (with one leucistic bird) were encountered on 10th (EC/JSB). Other large counts were at Prestwick Carr, where 250 birds were reported on 1st, increasing to 450 on 2nd (PCF), a flock of 310 on 20th at Grindon (ASJ) and 150 at Blanchland Fell also on 20th (ASJ). Further towards the coast about 120 birds were seen at Seghill Flash on 7th, which had reduced to 33 by 21st (MSH), and 60 were seen at Holy Island on 12th (ADM).

Other inland sightings included 110 at Rowley Burn on 16th (AJH), a flock of 70 at Acton Fell (Allendale) on 20th, 50 at Padon Hill (near Otterburn) on 3rd, 44 "northern" birds made up a feeding flock at near Bilsmoor on 30th and a count of 16 at Knockburn, Allendale on 20th where display was noted.

**Grey Plover** *Pluvialis squatarola*

Records came from three sites: Newbiggin Beacon Point reported three birds on the 5th (STH/IFo), Low Newton scrape recorded a single on 8th (TRD/JD) and 17 were at Boulmer, Seaton Point on 10th (NFO).



**Lapwing** *Vanellus vanellus*

Reports involving breeding came from a number of sites, notably Acton Fell in Allendale, where on the 20th, 120 pairs were noted with 30+ sitting on nests (ASJ). On the same day 25 pairs (a decrease on recent years) were recorded at Blanchland Fell (ASJ). Again, on the same day 33 birds were seen at Grindon exhibiting territorial display (ASJ). Smaller numbers involving breeding were recorded at Hedgeley GP on 3rd with three birds on nest (STH), while on 22nd at Backworth a fresh brood of three was seen (CGK) and on 10th six pairs were seen at Hedgeley GP and four pairs at Arcot Lane (DM/STH). Other reports but with no mention of breeding activity were at Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), where ten birds on 8th increased to 22 birds on 23rd, 20 birds at Hauxley NWT on 19th, 14+ at Grindon Lough on 20th, five at Bellasis Bridge on 3rd and three at Howdon on 4th.



A Lapwing lives up to its old name of Green Plover. Allendale on 20th April by Alan Jack

**Little Ringed Plover** *Charadrius dubius*

After the early arrival of a single at Haughton Strother GP last month, sightings of two were made at Cresswell Pond (TF/JFa) and of one at Derwent Reservoir (IFo) on 1st, the former birds seen at intervals until 8th (ADMc) and the latter bird still present on 28th. Three and two birds were seen at Haughton Strother GP (MR) and central Northumberland (STH) respectively on the 3rd with the central Northumberland birds reported again on 10th (DM/STH). A report of two came from Stobswood Pond on 10th (ADMc). The largest count was of four near Ryal on 8th (ALT) which was matched on 14th at Haughton Strother GP (MR). Reports of one or two birds came from Blagdon opencast, Budge Pool at Druridge and Prestwick Carr.

**Ringed Plover** *Charadrius hiaticula*

There were 24 birds at Cocklawburn on 20th (MHu/BWG). All other records were of three or fewer birds from a range of sites: Backworth, Boulmer, Brenkley Opencast, Derwent Reservoir, Haughton Strother, Hedgeley GP, the Tweed Estuary and West Hartburn.

**Whimbrel** *Numenius phaeopus*

Passage appeared to begin on 14th when seven birds were seen until 18th at Seaton Sluice (SSWT). Numbers began to grow with one bird reported from Holy Island on 17th (SR) and singles noted at Prestwick Carr and Cresswell on 20th. A count of 20+ was from Druridge Pools on 23rd (TF/JFa) and three flew north at Tynemouth on 24th (DRW). The peak count of the month was 37 on 27th at East Chevington (IF). Singles at Tynemouth and Budle Bay were seen at the close of the month.



**Curlew** *Numenius arquata*

The largest numbers reported were of passage or late wintering birds from coastal locations: peak count of 160 on 3rd at Druridge Pools (TD) and 60 on 1st at Holy Island which increased to 75 on 10th (MJC) and then to 100 on 17th (IK). Other large counts included both coastal and coastal plain locations: 61 at Prestwick Carr on 1st (PCF), 54 at Cresswell Pond on 9th, 48 at Holywell Dene on 17th (MSH), 44 in a field to the west of Budge Pool on 22nd (IFo), 36 on the Tweed Estuary on 8th (MHu) and 26 at Howdon on 9th (CB). Other lowland sites with numbers below five included Arcot Pond, Berwick North Shore, Hadston Scars, Hauxley NWT and Whitley Bay.

Further inland on breeding grounds, numbers were well established: 20 pairs were displaying at Acton Fell, Allendale on 20th (ASJ), 15 pairs were at Blanchland Fell on 20th, "large numbers" were seen displaying on Hexhamshire Common throughout the month and three displaying males (part of five birds seen) were reported on Bewick Moor on 8th. Breeding sites at Grindon Lough, Harthope Valley and Twice Brewed also held small numbers of breeding birds.

**Black-tailed Godwit** *Limosa limosa*

The peak count was of six at Druridge Pools on 29th (AA); the same location had a count of four on 17th (TF/JFa). Blyth Estuary held five birds on 10th with two in summer plumage and two or three birds were present for much of the month at Howdon (CB). Similarly, sightings of one or two birds were spread throughout the month on Holy Island. Two birds were seen at Hoppen Kiln Flash, near Lucker on 19th and a single at Low Newton Scrape on 8th.



A Black-tailed Godwit at Howdon Wetland by Colin Bradshaw

**Bar-tailed Godwit** *Limosa lapponica*

The Holy Island roost regularly held 300 birds, all in winter plumage (IK). The only other report was of a single on 1st at Boulmer (TRD/JD).

**Turnstone** *Arenaria interpres*

The WeBS at Berwick North Shore resulted in 40 on 6th (MHu) and the high tide roost at Cresswell Pond was 40 on 19th (IF) where there had been 20 on 5th; also 20 were at Boulmer on 1st. The most in the Hauxley area was 15 on 7th, up to 12 were in Whitley Bay, 12 in R Tweed Estuary on 8th and the last of the month were six at Seaton Sluice on 28th. One to four were at another four typical locations in the first half.

**Knot** *Calidris canutus*

The only reports were from Cresswell Pond with three on 20th and one on 22nd.

**Ruff** *Calidris pugnax*

Light passage was apparent in Druridge Bay with six at Cresswell Pond on 20th, four of which remained to 23rd (CB *et al.*). Earlier two were at Druridge Pools on 1st and three there on 17th, two at Hauxley NWT on 19th and singles at Cresswell Pond on 3rd and 9th.



**Sanderling** *Calidris alba*

Around 230 at Boulmer Seaton Point on 10th (NFO) was by some distance the highest count. The peak at St Mary's reached 77 on 23rd (ASJ), 55 were noted at Low Newton on 24th (RMHa/PMHa), 52 at Cocklawburn on 19th (MHu) and 50+ at East Chevington on 17th (RB/MB). The last of the month were 12 at Seaton Sluice on 28th preceded by small numbers at Hadston/Hauxley shores.

**Dunlin** *Calidris alpina*

A very light coastal passage comprised 12 at Hauxley NWT on 19th, up to ten at Cresswell Pond on four dates during 5th to 29th and one at Boulmer on 1st. Inland records were also scarce: two at Derwent Reservoir on 28th to 30th and one at Grindon Lough on 20th.



Two Dunlin at Cresswell Pond by Chris Barlow

**Purple Sandpiper** *Calidris maritima*

Early counts were relatively high: 150 at Annstead (Seahouses) on 5th (DGB) and a peak of 80 at Stag Rocks in a high-tide roost on 3rd (BRS); 25 were at Tynemouth on 25th (DRW). The peak at Seaton Sluice was seven on 15th, with two still there on 28th, and two to four were seen at Berwick, Boulmer, Low Newton and Whitley Bay.

**Common Sandpiper** *Actitis hypoleucos*

The first of the month arrived on 13th: two at Whittle Dene Reservoirs (SR) and one at Derwent Reservoir (IFo). Next day three were at Branton GP and by 29th one or two appeared at another 14 inland localities. Also during this period six pairs were on territory in Upper Coquetdale on 21st, four pairs in the R Breamish Valley on 19th and four pairs in Hepple/Sharperton on 21st (all ASJ). Later, four were noted at Corbridge on 30th.

A Common Sandpiper

Upper Coquetdale

21st April

Alan Jack



**Green Sandpiper** *Tringa ochropus*

Three were encountered at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 9th (SR), two at Hedgeley GP on 6th (IBDa/KDa) and singles at Haughton Strother GP on 1st and 3rd, Blagdon on 3rd and 7th, Caistron on 9th and at Cresswell Pond on 17th.

**Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia*

The sole report was of one at Haughton Strother GP on 28th (MR).

**Redshank** *Tringa totanus*

Concentrations at the coast or thereabouts predominated with 233 in R Tweed Estuary on 8th (MHu), 194 at Howdon on 1st (CB) and 100 in Budle Bay on 19th (MSH); 24-42 were noted at Cresswell Pond, Hauxley NWT, R Tyne and R Wansbeck Estuary and 18 at Berwick on 6th/7th. Smaller numbers occurred at another seven coastal sites. Inland records were sparse: after two at Derwent Reservoir on 1st it was a further two to three weeks before it was noted, often displaying, in potential breeding areas in Allendale, Grindon Lough, Rowley Burn and Westburnhope.

**Jack Snipe** *Limnocryptes minimus*

Most records came from Holy Island: one on 3rd, at least two on 10th and one on 24th (MJC/ADM). Singletons were found at Backworth on 5th and at Druridge Pools on 10th.

**Long-billed Dowitcher** *Limnodromus scolopaceus*

The long-staying individual in Druridge Bay remained at Cresswell Pond until 26th (ADM *et al.*).

By the end of its stay it had assumed full breeding plumage. The photographs below show the bird on 2nd April by Alan Jack and on 21st April by Chris Barlow.





**Woodcock** *Scolopax rusticola*

One was roding at Westburnhope, date(s) unspecified (STE) and one was at Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) on 23rd (TRD/JD).

**Snipe** *Gallinago gallinago*

The most at Backworth was 16 on 5th (CGK/GPK) and at Haughton Strother GP the maximum was 15 on 14th (MR); 11 were in Allendale on 20th (ASJ) with display noted and 10 at Arcot Lane Flash on 10th (DM). Five to nine were found at Cresswell Pond, Holy Island, Howdon, Prestwick Carr and St Mary's with three or fewer at Bothal Pond, Derwent Reservoir, Gosforth Park NR and Hauxley NWT.



A Common Snipe in the open  
Howdon Wetland by Colin Bradshaw

**Great Skua** *Stercorarius skua*

One was reported at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) on 24th (IJ) but no further details.

**Auk** *sp*

The only significant count at Seaton Sluice, prior to 18th, was 100 N in one hour (SSWT).

**Razorbill** *Alca torda*

At Needles Eye (Berwick) 50 were counted on 26th (SVM), around 30 were on the cliff at Dunstanburgh Castle on 17th (TD) and at least 22 were at Stag Rocks on 3rd (BRS). Elsewhere, single-figure counts of one to five were noted at six localities between Whitley Bay and Berwick (TRD/JD/MHu/IJ/JL/BWG/BRS).

**Guillemot** *Uria aalge*

Four records only, comprising one to three at Berwick, Boulmer, Cullernose Point and Seaton Sluice (TRD/JD/MHu/DLo).

**Sandwich Tern** *Sterna sandvicensis*

Numbers passing Seaton Sluice started to build up from 14th-18th as migrant birds returned towards their breeding colonies with 102 N and 53 S recorded over this period; the first birds were noted there on 7th when three moved N (SSWT). Early arrivals at other sites during the first week were two to ten at Bamburgh, Berwick, Boulmer and Holy Island (BWG/MJC/TRD/JD/MHu/JDL) but numbers increased from 16th with highest counts of 24 at Goswick (EHa) and 12-18 at Bamburgh, Cheswick and Whitley Bay (IJ/BRS/MHu/JDL). Up to seven were at six other coastal localities.

**Common Tern** *Sterna hirundo*

The first sighting of the year was a single at Wallsend Swallow Pond on 14th (GPK) and two flew N at Seaton Sluice on 18th (SSWT). Up to five were at East Chevington from 17th and one or two elsewhere at Arcot Pond, Gosforth Park NR and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

**Arctic Tern** *Sterna paradisaea*

The first arrivals were a single at St Mary's Island on 17th (AC) followed by two at East Chevington and Berwick Meadow Haven on 20th and 26th respectively (IFo/MHu) and a single at Whitley Bay on 24th (IJ).

**Kittiwake** *Rissa tridactyla*

At Berwick Pier on 26th, 770/hour passed N on 26th (MHu) and the highest count at Seaton Sluice, up to the 18th, was 110 N in an hour (SSWT). Maximum gatherings elsewhere were around 800 on the sea at Cullernose Point on 8th (TRD/JD), 60 on the sea and cliffs at Dunstanburgh Castle (TD) and 55 pairs were at nests on the Tyne Bridge North Pier on 21st with five pairs counted on other nearby buildings (JMA).

**Black-headed Gull** *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

A gathering of at least 800 birds was on Druridge Pools on 9th (TF/JFa) and ca. 700 at Grindon on 19th (MRS) but wintering flocks had largely dispersed with few reports submitted comprising only 62 at Hauxley NWT (HRS) and 36 on the Tweed Estuary (MHu); one or two were at a handful of other localities.

**Little Gull** *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

The first sign of the usual light summer influx was recorded on 17th when an adult was at Druridge Pools (TF/JFA) with another adult at Gosforth Park NR on 25th (NHSN).

**Mediterranean Gull** *Larus melanocephalus*

All reports this month came from East Chevington, Druridge Pools and Cresswell Pond with a maximum of ten at Druridge Pools on 9th, consisting of three adults and seven immatures.(TF/JFa); at the other sites, one to three were present up to 10th (PCF/JL/TF/JFa) with the last sighting being a single at Druridge Pools on 13th (MSH).

**Common Gull** *Larus canus*

Numbers declined this month as birds moved away towards their northern breeding grounds. The maximum count at Seaton Sluice was 210 N in two hours on 15th with smaller movements noted there on 7th and 14th (SSWT). Concentrations of 500 were present at Low Leam on 3rd (JR/NA), with 200-250 at three sites up to mid-month, namely Branton GP, Fontburn and Haughton Strother GP (MR/TD/TRD/JD). Smaller groups of 30-60 were seen at Big Waters, Cocklawburn and Wooden (JMA/SPP/MHu).

**Lesser Black-backed Gull** *Larus fuscus graelsii*

A high count of 61 came from Branton GP on 7th (IBDa/KDa), with double-figure counts elsewhere of 36 at Swallow Pond on 12th (GPK) and 25 at Budle Bay on 19th (MSH). Seven were at Prestwick Carr (PCF) and five at Castle Island (CDH) with two to four at six other inland and three coastal sites.

**Herring Gull** *Larus argentatus argenteus*

The largest count came from a WeBS on the River Tweed Estuary on 8th where 276 were found (MHu), up to 112 were present all month at Rockcliffe (IJ) and 100 were at Castle Island on 1st (CDH). Elsewhere, gatherings of 50-90 were recorded from Berwick North Shore, the Black Middens, St Mary's Island and Swallow Pond (JMA/MHu/CDH) and up to 40 at Exhibition Park, Leazes Park, Newcastle Quayside, North Shields and Tynemouth Boating Lake (JMA/DM).

**Iceland Gull** *Larus glaucooides*

An adult flew N at Rockcliffe on 17th (IJ) and was seen again a little later still moving N at St Mary's Island (AC). The long-staying immature remained at the QE II CP Lake until at least the 26th (AA/LJM/IFo) and, probably the same bird, was seen at nearby Widdrington Station on 7th (IFo). The immature bird seen last month at Branton GP was again there on 3rd and 7th (TRD/JD/IBDa/KDa).

**Great Black-backed Gull** *Larus marinus*

Few records this month including 13, at various stages of immaturity, at Derwent Reservoir on 18th (IFo), ten at Grindon on 19th and one to eight at other localities in the Berwick area, Hauxley NWT, Whitley Bay and the River Tyne at the Business Park (MRS/DM/IJ/MHu/HRS).

**Stock Dove** *Columba oenas*

The largest count of 28 at Howdon on 1st (CB), five at East Chevington on 7th (IFo), four at Plessey Woods CP on 5th (LJM) and Backworth on 22nd (CGK) with up to three in gardens at Rothbury and Old Hartley. One to two were at seven other locations.

A Stock Dove  
Howdon Wetland  
Colin Bradshaw





**Woodpigeon** *Columba palumbus*

A big gathering of 750 at Eglington on 17th (MJC), 220 at Derwent Reservoir on 1st (IFo) with 30 at Hartley West Farm and 20 at Whitley Bay during the month. 16 were at the weir Amble Braid on 7th (JMA) with one to six at Eachwick on a nest in an open barn at Matfen and flying out to sea at Seaton Sluice.

**Collared Dove** *Streptopelia decaocto*

The peak count was 20 at Cullercoats / Whitley Bay during the month (IJ), three at Wallsend Metro Station on 23rd (CDH), a pair nesting in the platform roof of Longbenton Metro Station on 13th and one to two at three other locations.

**Cuckoo** *Cuculus canorus*

Heard at Eglington on 13th and 17th (per NNBC/MJC) at Harwood Forest on 28th (STE) and Simonside on 30th (ASJ).

**Barn Owl** *Tyto alba*

Two were at Eglington on 2nd (RHB) and singles at Humshaugh regularly during the month (SW), Wooler on 4th, Doddington on 6th, Carter Bar on 7th, Brocolitia on 14th, Cresswell Pond on 19th and 23rd, Linden Hall (Longhorsley) and nr Darras Hall on 20th with a road casualty on A69 near Whittle Farm on 20th.

**Little Owl** *Athene noctua*

The established pair at Shiremoor all month (CGK) with singles at Druridge hamlet on 18th and Druridge Pools on 23rd (ADMc/TF/JFa).

**Tawny Owl** *Strix aluco*

A pair were at a garden nestbox at Bellingham on 28th (PCF), with singles at Rochester on 7th, Wark on 12th and 28th, Hauxley RS on 19th, Castlehills (Berwick) on 19th and 20th, St. Nicholas Park and Brunton Bridge (Gosforth) and Humshaugh on 21st, Holywell Dene on 22nd, East Ord on 23rd and Derwent Reservoir on 27th. A road casualty was at Bareless on 1st.

**Long-eared Owl** *Asio otus*

One roosted in hawthorn at Askews Walk (Berwick) on 4th (BWG), at a confidential site on 14th (CGK/GPK) and was at Horncliffe on 23rd (JDL).

**Short-eared Owl** *Asio flammeus*

Three were at Prestwick Carr on 22nd with one to two there all month and one at Horton Grange (Blagdon) on 5th probably one of the same individuals (PCF). Singles were at various locations on Holy Island all month, at Swallow Pond (Wallsend) on 12th and Meggie's Burn (Blyth) on the same date (SPP/MHp), High Letham and Berwick Walls on 15th & 17th (BWG) and a light individual at Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay) on 21st, 22nd and 29th (MNC).

**Swift** *Apus apus*

The first were at Big Waters and Swallow Pond (Wallsend) on 22nd (SPP/GPK) with three at East Chevington on 23rd including an aberrant bird with extensive white markings (TF/JFa). Two were at Holywell Pond on 30th (KWY) with singles at Arcot Pond, Humshaugh, Prestwick Carr, Tynemouth and Whittle Dene Reservoirs before the month end.

**Kingfisher** *Alcedo atthis*

Just three reports of singles at Gosforth Park NR during the month, Jesmond Dene on 2nd (TRD) and R.Tyne at Newburn on 22nd (JSB).

**Wryneck** *Jynx torquilla*

One visited a garden at Alnmouth on 21st

**Green Woodpecker** *Picus viridis*

Two at Swallowship Wood (Hexham) and more than one at Gosforth Park were the only multiple counts (AJH/NHSN). One called all month at Rothbury and seen on 20th with singles at Shiellow Woods on 8th, Fontburn on 10th, Wallington on 17th, Prestwick Carr on 22nd, Blagdon Hall on 23rd, Wark on 25th and Thrunton Woods on 27th.

**Great Spotted Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos major*

On 1st three were at Eachwick and drumming at Shiellow Woods on 8th (CDB/MJC) with two at Tynemouth on 1st, Lincoln Hill on 2nd and visiting a garden at Eachwick on 29th (CB/SW/CDB). Singles visited an Old Hartley garden over 23 times (RJP) and were also at nine other widespread localities.

**Ring necked Parakeet** *Psittacula krameri*

Six were in trees together at Bothal Street (Byker) on 3rd (SPP).

**Kestrel** *Falco tinnunculus*

A pair was at Eachwick on 1st (CDB). Single birds were recorded at Burradon, Castle Island (Ashington), Cresswell Pond, Cullercoats, Harthope Valley, Holywell Dene and Red Row.

**Merlin** *Falco columbarius*

Single birds were at Holy Island on several dates (MJC/IK), Fowberry on 7th (JPL), Elwick on 14th (JPL) and Derwent Reservoir on 27th (IFo).

**Peregrine** *Falco peregrinus*

Two birds were at a nest site throughout the month (ALT) and other pairs were at other confidential sites during the month (CGK/GPK/STH) and a single bird was on Holy Island on 3rd and 10th (SR/AH/ ADM).

**Great Grey Shrike** *Lanius excubitor*

The individual at Harwood Forest was still present on 3rd (CGK/GPK *et al.*).

**Magpie** *Pica pica*

Up to six were at Hartley West Farm during the month and the same maximum count at Whitley Bay / Cullercoats (RJP/IJ). Two defended a nest at Chapel House from Carrion Crows on 7th and two at Fawdon on 16th (MH/CDB).

**Jay** *Garrulus glandarius*

Niger seed spilled from feeders by Goldfinch attracted two of a maximum five birds at Eachwick on 3rd (CDB). Four was the peak count at Gosforth Park NR, three at Plessey Woods on 12th and Thrunton Woods on 15th (LJM/TRD/JD) with singles at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 2nd and Jesmond Dene on 5th.

**Jackdaw** *Corvus monedula*

The evening roost at Gosforth Park NR was 300+ (NHSN) with 11 at Eachwick on 1st (CDB). At Humshaugh 780 sticks were found below a nest under construction for the period 13th-17th (TWi).

**Rook** *Corvus frugilegus*

Just one report of five at Bolam Lake on 16th (CDB).

**Carrion Crow** *Corvus corone*

On 14th 30 were at North Shields Fish Quay car park (JMA), 22 at Padon Hill on 3rd (JR/NA), 18 flying north at Holy Island on 10th (MJC) with four at East Chevington on 7th and Bolam Lake on 16th. A regular nesting pair at Holy Island Lough on 17th constructed a new nest almost entirely from seaweed (IK).

**Hooded Crow** *Corvus corone cornix*

One was at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) on 16th and Cresswell Pond on 26th (IJ/SR).

**Raven** *Corvus corax*

Ten was the high count at Shillmoor (Upper Coquetdale) on 9th (JR) with three from Shillmoor to Fairhaugh on 17th (IRD) and displaying at Kielder Burn on 19th (MH/AA). Two sub-adults flew north at Sandham Bay (Holy Island) on 17th (IK) and singles at Hawsen Burn (Harthope Valley) on 8th, Kielder Castle on 9th and Branton GP on 21st.

**Goldcrest** *Regulus regulus*

All high counts came from Holy Island between 1st and 12th with the peak 26 on 1st and 16 on 10th (MJC/ADM). Eight were at Bolam Lake on 16th (CDB) with more than three at St Mary's Wetland on 2nd (MSH) and one to two at 13 other widespread localities.



A Goldcrest at Cresswell by Chris Barlow

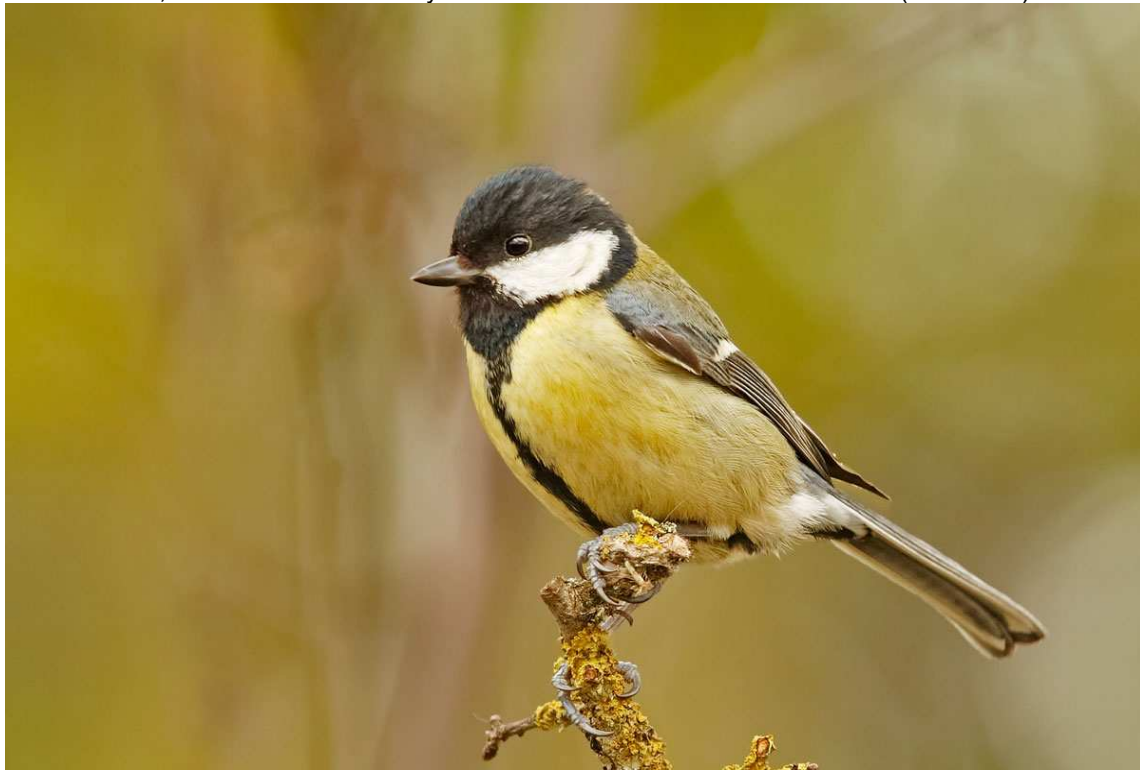


**Blue Tit** *Cyanistes caeruleus*

A peak of 14 at Bolam Lake on 16th (CDB) with seven regularly on feeders at Holywell Dene during the month (RJP), four at Eachwick on 1st and three at Fawdon on 16th.

**Great Tit** *Parus major*

Ten at Bolam Lake on 16th, five on feeders at Holywell Dene and four at Eachwick on 1st (CDB/RJP).



A Great Tit at Howdon Wetland by Colin Bradshaw

**Coal Tit** *Periparus ater*

One to two in Holywell Dene and an Old Hartley Garden during the month (RJP) with two at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) (IJ) and singles at Bolam Lake, Eachwick and Kielder Castle.

**Willow Tit** *Poecile montanus*

Two regularly at Backworth and Holywell Dene where they were seen visiting an Old Hartley garden on 17 occasions (CGK/RJP). A pair were excavating a nest hole at Prestwick Carr on 2nd which they defended from Blue Tits on 23rd (PCF). Two visited a garden at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 3rd and at County Hall (Morpeth) on 20th (NFO/MJC) with singles at seven other locations.



A Marsh Tit at Bolam Lake on 16th April by Chris Barlow

**Marsh Tit** *Poecile palustris*

Two were regularly at garden feeders Low Cocklaw (Berwick) (BWG) and at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) (NFO) with singles at Rothbury on 10th, Bolam Lake on 16th, the observer's first record there since 1999 (CDB) and Middle School Dene (Hexham) the observer's first there for 45 years (AJR).

**Skylark** *Alauda arvensis*

A drive of 33kms across the ranges at Otterburn found 150 singing birds with many more on ground feeding (ASJ). 85 at Holy Island on 10th with 45 there on 3rd (MJC), 20+ at Simonside on 30th with five singing on reclaimed tip at Seghill on 5th (CGK/GPK). One to two were at Cresswell Pond, Milkwell (Corbridge), Helsay Point, Holywell and Town Moor (Newcastle).



A Skylark on Holy Island by Mike Carr on 4th April

*Hirundine* sp. 150 mainly Sand Martin were at East Chevington on 5th.

**Sand Martin** *Riparia riparia*

Some large counts as birds fed over water in cold weather with 380 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 13th (SR), 350 at Branton GP on 21st (MJC), 220 over the Tweed at West Ord (Berwick) on 23rd (MHu), 200+ at Swallow Pond on 15th (SPP), 200 at Corbridge on 20th (JMA), 125 at Gosforth Park NR on 23rd (NHSN) and 120 at East Chevington on 1st (MH). 30-70 were at many of the above and Arcot Pond, Barrowburn, Berwick, Cramlington, Derwent Reservoir, Humshaugh and Morpeth with one to 26 at 25 other widespread localities.

**Swallow** *Hirundo rustica*

Over 100 at Swallow Pond on 15th and Gosforth Park NR on 26th (SPP/NHSN) with 80+ at Arcot Pond on 23rd (LJM) and 60+ at Scotch Gill Woods (Morpeth) on 16th (TD). 25+ fed over R.Blyth at Plessey Mill Farm (Cramlington) on 12th, 20 over R.Tweed at West Ord (Berwick) on 23rd, 20 at Derwent Reservoir on 28th and 14 at Holywell Dene on 24th with one to ten at 31 other widespread localities.



Newly arrived Swallows at Corbridge on 20th April by Alan Jack



**House Martin** *Delichon urbica*

Birds present from 1st but scarce till 17th when sightings became daily but generally below one to two birds. Three large counts of 45 at Haughton Castle on 24th (SW), 40+ at Arcot Pond on 23rd (LJM) and 30+ at Swallow Pond on 22nd (GPK). Three were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 11th and Swallow Pond on 15th with one to two at 22 other locations.

**Long-tailed Tit** *Aegithalos caudatus*

Most reports concerned singles or pairs in breeding territory, however up to five were noted at Rothbury throughout and four at Cullercoats. Two pairs were at noted Arcot Lane on 10th and three at Corbridge and Howdon. One to two were also reported from Bolam Lake, Brandling and Exhibition Parks (Newcastle), Eachwick, Elswick, Harthope Valley, Holywell Dene, Jesmond Dene and Tynemouth.

**Chiffchaff** *Phylloscopus collybita*

A total of 26 were noted along a 2.5km stretch from Whiteadder Point-New Mills (Berwick) on 20th (BWG). At Holy Island the peak counts were 23 on 12th and 17 on 17th, with one to eight noted on a further five dates. Other notable counts included 14 singing at Plessey Woods on 5th, 13 at Blagdon Hall on 23rd, 12 singing males at Holywell Dene on 30th and ten singing at Branton GP and Jesmond Dene on 8th-9th. Six to eight were reported from Backworth, Bamburgh, Bolam Lake, Derwent Reservoir, Gosforth Park NR, Hawsen Burn and Swallow Pond with one to five at a further 50 localities.

**Willow Warbler** *Phylloscopus trochilus*

The first was at Branton GP on 5th (IBDa/KDa). There was a widespread influx from 8th-12th, when up to three were noted at 16 mainly inland localities. By 19th birds were numerous throughout, including 'many' in birch thickets from Ridley Stokoe (Bellingham) to Scaup Farm (Kielder). Peak counts during the month included 49 singing males at Wingates on 30th, 46 from Heighleygate-Todburn (7km) on 30th and 20+ at Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) on 21st (all ASJ). On Holy Island, 15 were feeding in the Vicar's garden during a brief sunny spell on 29th, while elsewhere ten to 13 were noted at Arcot Pond, Blagdon Hall, Gosforth Park NR, Howdon and Whiteadder Point-New Mills (Berwick) from 20th-23rd. One to five were reported from a further 32 localities.



Right: a Willow Warbler and below: a male Blackcap

both at Howdon Wetland

Colin Bradshaw

**Blackcap** *Sylvia atricapilla*

One to six were noted at Holy Island on five dates, with a peak on 12th (ADM). Six were also reported from Hauxley NR on 19th, five singing males were at Rising Sun CP on 13th and four were singing at Gosforth Park NR on 24th. Elsewhere the species was widespread with one to three reported from a further 36 localities.

**Garden Warbler** *Sylvia borin*

Singles were noted at Castlehills (Berwick) on 20th, Doddington on 21st and Blagdon Hall on 23rd.



**Lesser Whitethroat** *Sylvia curruca*

The first of the year was a singing male at Linton ponds on 22nd (CDH), followed by another at East Chevington on 23rd. A single was at Holywell Pond on 28th, while on Holy Island two passage birds were present on 29th and one on 30th; another was at Cramlington on 30th.

**Whitethroat** *Sylvia communis*

The first arrival was a bird singing at High Callerton on 20th (MRS) and at Druridge Pools and Prestwick Carr on 23rd (TF/JFa/PCF). Two at Holywell Pond and singles at Branton GP, Low Newton and Rising Sun CP on 24th, were followed by singles at Holywell Dene on 25th and Arcot Pond on 26th. By the end of the month, five were noted at Backworth (CGK) and singles at Beacon Hill (Cramlington), St Mary's Island and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.



A Whitethroat at Holywell Dene

by Alan Jack on 24th April

**Grasshopper Warbler** *Locustella naevia*

One at the Blyth Estuary on 10th was the first arrival (LJM). In the Cramlington area a total of 15 were singing by the end of the month (including seven-eight at West Hartford and four at Arcot Pond). Two were at Prestwick Carr on 19th, while singles were reported from East Chevington, Gosforth Park NR, Harwood Forest and St Mary's Island.

**Sedge Warbler** *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

The first was at Gosforth Park NR on 15th (NHSN), rising to three by 27th. At East Chevington, one on 17th rose to three by 20th. Elsewhere, two were at Branton on 27th and singles were noted at Arcot Pond, Backworth, Hauxley NR, Prestwick Carr, Tynemouth and Woodhorn Flash.

**Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

All reports were from Gosforth Park NR where the first was heard on 18th, rising to eight by the month's end (NHSN).



**Nuthatch** *Sitta europaea*

Very well reported this month with many birds heard in full song. The peak counts were seven at Bolam Lake on 16th (CDB), six at Hareshaw Linn on 17th and four at Kielder Castle on 9th. Counts of three came from Arcot Hall GC and Holywell Dene, while two were at Capheaton, Horncliffe, Leazes Park, Plessey Woods and Wark (North Tyne). Singles were noted at a further 13 localities, including the Harthope Valley.

**Treecreeper** *Certhia familiaris*

Three singing birds were at Capheaton on 3rd. Pairs prospecting nest sites were noted at Castlehills and New Water Heugh (both Berwick) on 20th. One to two were reported from Bolam Lake, Dilston, Hareshaw Linn, Harthope Valley, Holywell Pond, Humshaugh, Glen Ridley, Housesteads, Jesmond Dene and Pauperhaugh.

**Wren** *Troglodytes troglodytes*

A BBS visit to Blagdon Hall produced 20 on 23rd, when 13 were also noted at Prestwick Carr. Ten were noted in Holywell Dene on 10th and seven were at Bolam Lake on 16th, with singles also reported from Corbridge, Eachwick and an Old Hartley garden.

**Starling** *Sturnus vulgaris*

The only sizeable flocks were 200 at Boulmer on 10th and up to 100 at Cullercoats during the month.

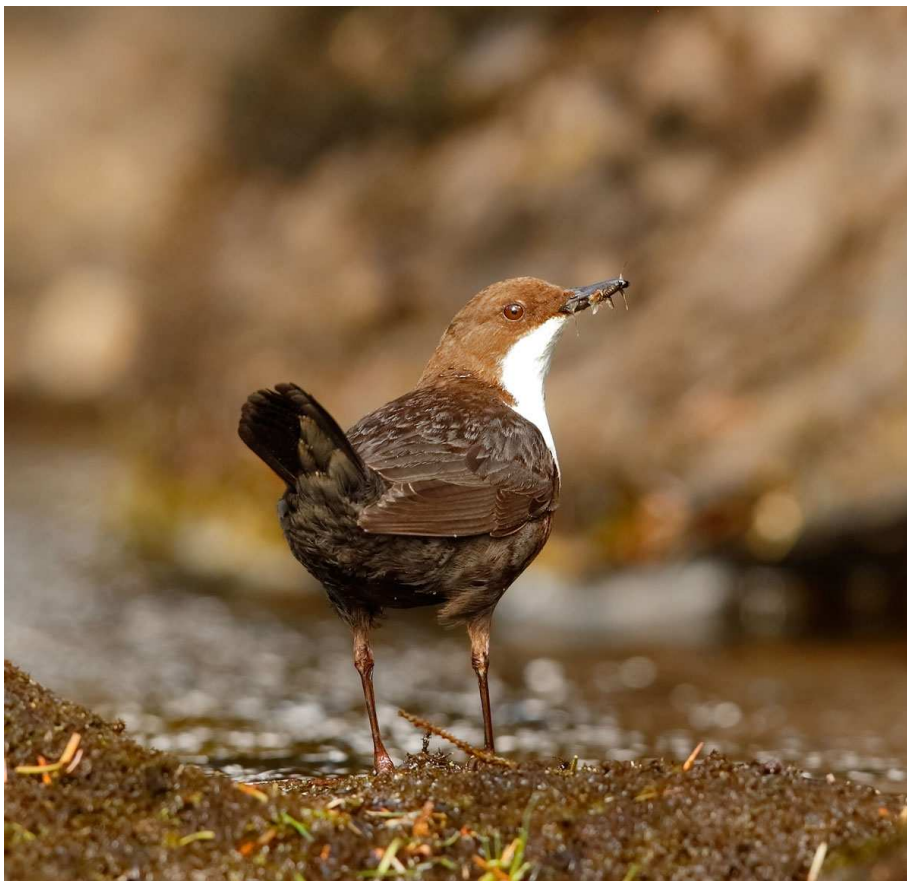
**Dipper** *Cinclus cinclus*

One to two were reported from Berwick Hill bridge, Bywell bridge, Carey Burn, Holywell Dene, Hulne Park, Plessey Woods and Stamfordham.

A Dipper at Thropton by Colin Bradshaw

**Ring Ouzel** *Turdus torquatus*

After the first at Hawsen Burn at the end of last month there were further reports from this area throughout April, with the peak count a remarkable 'flock' of 11 on 21st (TRD/JD); one to three were noted here on a further five dates. On Holy Island there were three on 15th, seven on 17th and four on 29th. One at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 5th was a site first, while further reports from upland breeding areas were four at Yearle on 29th and one to two at Alwinton, Carey Burn, Ford, Holburn Moss, Makendon, Simonside and Sipton Burn.

**Blackbird** *Turdus merula*

A peak count of 36 singing males was noted during a 4km circular walk in the Horton Burn area (Cramlington) on 11th (LJM). Up to 20 were noted at Cullercoats during the month, 14 were recorded during a BBS visit at Blagdon Hall on 23rd and eight were at Holywell Dene, where nest building and feeding young was noted. A pair abandoned two newly hatched young at Gosforth early in the month and two to four were noted at Bolam Lake, Eachwick, Fawdon and Old Hartley, the latter on eggs.

**Fieldfare** *Turdus pilaris*

300 at Wallington Hall on 17th was the largest gathering (ASJ), followed by 250 at Prestwick Carr on 3rd. Counts of 200 came from Brocolitia on 1st, Lowick on 9th and Longhorsley on 29th; 150 were at Berwick Moor on 15th and 130 at Humshaugh on 1st and at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 5th. Counts of 80-110 came from Botany, Ellington, Gunnerton, Linden Hall and Ryal, with up to 75 noted at a further 15 localities, including 19 at Simonside on 30th.

**Song Thrush** *Turdus philomelos*

A total of 12 were noted at Ingram (Breamish Valley) on 19th (ASJ). In Holywell Dene, a nest with young was found on 20th and two fledged young were seen near the nest on 30th. One to three were also reported from Blagdon Hall, Bolam Lake, Corbridge, Cullercoats, Eachwick, Grindon Lough, Hulne Park and Wark (North Tyne).

**Redwing** *Turdus iliacus*

The largest counts were early in the month, with 24 at Airy Holme Reservoir (Shotleyfield) and 20 at Capheaton on 3rd (IFo/STE) and 12 at Ellington on 1st. One to eight noted at Backworth, Eachwick, Gunnerton, Holy Island, Howdon and Wark (North Tyne) during the first eight days of the month, and another was at Holy Island on 12th. One flew E at Humshaugh on 23rd and two were at Cupola Bridge and Holy Island on 29th.

**Mistle Thrush** *Turdus viscivorus*

It was a quiet month for this species. A pair mobbed a Magpie near a nest at Leazes Park on 6th and a pair was nest building at Harwood Forest on 23rd. Two were noted at Corbridge, while singing males were at Berwick town centre on 21st, Fulbeck (Morpeth) on 9th and Heiferlaw on 4th.

**Robin** *Erithacus rubecula*

Holy Island held seven on 12th and 15 on 29th (ADM). A count of 13 came from Blagdon Hall on 23rd, while eight were noted at Bolam Lake on 16th. Two to four were noted at a further three localities.

**Pied Flycatcher** *Ficedula hypoleuca*

Seven (five males / two females) were at Letah Wood (Hexham) by 21st (AJH).

**Black Redstart** *Phoenicurus ochruros*

At Holy Island, five were noted on 12th (ADM), two on 17th and a single on 30th. Singles were reported from Bates Minewater Treatment Works on 3rd, Lowick on 7th, well inland at Corbridge on 8th, Snab Point on 10th, St Mary's Wetland on 12th and Tynemouth on 16th.

**Redstart** *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

One at Holy Island on 17th was the first arrival (SR), followed by males well inland at Haughton Strother (Humshaugh) on 18th and Simonsides on 19th. Up to four singing males were at Haughton Strother by 24th (MR) and at Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) on 30th (ASJ). One to three were also reported from Benridge Moor, Letah Wood (Hexham), South Charlton and Swallowship (Hexham).

**Whinchat** *Saxicola rubetra*

The first arrival was a stunning male at Hawsen Burn (Harthope Valley) on 24th (AJ). Further males were seen at Windyhaugh (Upper Coquetdale ) on 27th and at Simonside on 30th.

**Stonechat** *Saxicola rubicola*

Peak counts during the month were six at Druridge Pools on 3rd (TD), four at East Chevington on 10th and at Cocklawburn on 28th, three between Stag Rocks and Budle Point on 10th and three at Holy Island on 17th. One to two were also present at Berwick Little Beach, Cresswell Pond, Cullernose Point, Gloucester Lodge (Blyth), Harwood Forest, Ingram, Low Newton, Prestwick Carr, Scaup Farm (Kielder), West Hartford and Winnows Hill (Slaley).

**Wheatear** *Oenanthe oenanthe*

A total of 58 records were received for the month. Peak counts were 12 in Upper Coquetdale on 21st (ASJ), eight at Prestwick Carr on 16th and up to seven on Holy Island during the month. Counts of six came from Beal, Blanchland and Derwent Reservoir, with four at Backworth and at East Chevington. One to three were reported from a further 23 localities.



A male Wheatear  
Cresswell by Chris Barlow

**Dunnock** *Prunella modularis*

A total of eight were seen at Prestwick Carr on 30th(PCF). Elsewhere, one to four were reported at four sites.



**House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus*

In the Whitley Bay/Cullercoats area, around 100 were present throughout the month(IJ/ASJ). 20 at Battlesteads Hotel (Wark) on 1st (CB). Five to seven were at four other sites.

**Tree Sparrow** *Passer domesticus*

The month's peak count was 30 at Cresswell Pond on 4th(CB). 18 were noted at Haughton Strother on 1st and ten at a Linden Hall garden all month (MR/NFO). One to nine were at 16 further sites throughout the county.

**Yellow Wagtail** *Motacilla Flava*

A peak of 14 birds were at Whittle Dene on 30th (SR). Six individuals were noted flying north during the month at St. Mary's Island and four likewise at Tynemouth on 30th (ASJ/DRW). One to two were at ten further locations.

**Grey Wagtail** *Motacilla cinerea*

A minimum of eighteen pairs were located in Upper Coquetdale during April, with 19 individuals noted on 21st (JR/ASJ). Four were at Bywell Bridge on 10th and three at Plessey Woods on 5th. One to two were at five other sites.

**Pied Wagtail** *Motacilla alba yarrelli*

18 pairs were located in Upper Coquetdale on 21st (ASJ). On 5th 18 were feeding on a newly ploughed area at Stobswood Opencast (MH/AA). 12 were at Haughton Strother on 1st and at Bamburgh on 15th. One to four at seven other sites.



A Grey Wagtail tests the  
water

Howdon Wetland

Colin Bradshaw

**White Wagtail** *Motacilla a.alba*

Four were at Haughton Strother on 14th (MR). Three were at Derwent Reservoir and Druridge Bay on 4th and 10th respectively and two were noted at 15 other widespread sites during the month.

A White Wagtail

Cresswell

Chris Barlow

**Tree Pipit** *Anthus trivialis*

The first bird was displaying at Mootlaw Quarry on 8th (ALT). Eight singing males were located in Harwood Forest on 23rd with six noted on 28th(STE). Singles displaying at Beacon Hill and Simonside on 30th (ASJ).



**Meadow Pipit** *Anthus pratensis*

On Holy Island, 120 on 3rd had increased to 160 by 10th (MJC). The Otterburn Ranges held many breeding birds with 100 + in pairs and displaying, noted on 30th (ASJ). 60 were on a newly ploughed area at Stobswood on 5th (MH/AA). 38 in Harthope on 8th included obvious movement W up the valley (AJ). On 2nd, 23 were feeding in fields at Lincoln Hill (SW). 15 were observed flying N at Gosforth Village Garden on 24th (MJC), and 12 were at Eachwick on 3rd (CDB). Two at Rockcliffe, Cullercoats on 17th.



Two Pipits

Top: a Meadow Pipit  
from Allendale by

Alan Jack and below:

a Rock Pipit on  
Holy Island shore by  
Mike Carr

**Rock Pipit** *Anthus petrosus*

Nine were present at Rockcliffe all month (IJ). The only other report was of a single at Boulmer on 1st.

**Brambling** *Fringilla montifringilla*

Three males and a female attended feeders in a Rothbury garden from the fifth to the month's end (TRD/JD). Three passage birds were seen at Holy Island on 10th. Also on the coast, a female was in a Tynemouth garden on 17th (MJC/DRW). One to two were noted at seven further sites.

**Chaffinch** *Fringilla coelebs*

60+ were seen at Wark on 6th, and 40 at Redmire Bridge on 3rd (PRM/JR/NA). One to fifteen were at six other localities.



**Bullfinch** *Pyrrula pyrrhula*

Three pairs were at Holywell Dene during the month (ASJ). Up to five were in gardens at Rothbury and Old Hartley during April. Five also at Bolam on 16th. Two to three were seen at 15 further sites.



A Splendid cock Bullfinch at Howdon Wetland by Colin Bradshaw

**Greenfinch** *Chloris chloris*

Nine were at Linden Hall on 5th (NFO), with six at feeders at East Ord the following day (MHu). One to five were seen at eleven other sites.



A male Greenfinch at Howdon Wetland by Colin Bradshaw

**Linnet** *Carduelis cannabina*

61 were counted on Holy Island on 3rd (MJC). 19 at Boulmer on 10th and ten throughout the month at Rockcliffe. Two to nine were at eight further sites.

**Twite** *Carduelis flavirostris*

The sole report was of two on Holy Island on 1st (MJC).

**Lesser Redpoll** *Carduelis caberet*

A feeding flock of 23 was at Derwent Reservoir on 27th (IFo). During the month, 12 were ringed at Humshaugh (SW). One to six were noted at a further seven sites. Pairs were noted commonly during the month, with display flights in the Beacon Hill, Todburn, Wingates and Simonside areas (ASJ).

**Crossbill** *Loxia curvirostra*

Three small flocks totalling 20 birds were seen at Harwood on 6th (STE). Eight were at Druridge Bay Country Park on 17th (TF/JF). Two to three birds were at three other typical inland sites.

**Goldfinch** *Carduelis carduelis*

A total of 83 were ringed during the month at Humshaugh(SW). 32 visited feeders at East Ord (Berwick) on 6th (MHu). 21 seen at Prestwick Carr on 4th, with 20 all month at Rockcliffe (PCF/IJ). One to ten were at a further eight sites.

A Goldfinch

Howdon Wetland

by Colin Bradshaw

**Siskin** *Carduelis spinus*

A flock of 20 at Humshaugh on 2nd increased during the month to 200 by 15th. 321 were ringed here in the month, with ten controls and four retrapped from 2013 (SW). Nearby, 20-45 were at Wark on several dates. Elsewhere, one to 12 were at 17 other widespread sites, including gardens at Linden, Rothbury and Berwick and coastal passage with two birds at Holy Island and Bamburgh during April.



A Siskin in a Woolsington Garden

John Littleton

**Yellowhammer** *Emberiza citronella*

Eight were at Houghton Castle on 24th (SW). Five were at East Cramlington on 7th (STH). Singing males included five at Beacon Hill and Holywell and four at Ingram during the month (ASJ). Singles were at four other sites.



**Reed Bunting** *Emberiza schoeniclus*

11 were in Upper Coquetdale on 30th (9 males) (ASJ) and 10+ at Gosforth Park in the month. Six singing males were at St Mary's on several dates (ASJ). Five were at Derwent Reservoir on 11th (IFo) and Prestwick Carr on 23rd (PCF). Three were at Howdon on 9th and two were there on 17th (CB). One visited a Holywell Dene garden on several dates (CDH).



A male Reed Bunting at Berwick on 21st April by Mike Carr

**ESCAPES, HYBRIDS AND BIRDS OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN****Escapes****Harris's Hawk** *Parabuteo unicinctus*

One was seen with Buzzards at Prestwick Carr on 7th (PCF).

**Hybrids****Aythya hybrid** *Aythya sp*

The female resembling a Scaup was noted again at Killingworth Lake on 6th (MSH).

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Bamburgh Ringing Station, Berwick Wildlife Group, Hauxley Ringing Station, Natural History Society of Northumbria, North Northumberland Bird Club, Seaton Sluice Watch Tower.

**Apologies for any accidental omissions****BULLETIN COMPILATION AND PRODUCTION**

This bulletin was compiled by Graeme Bowman (Mute Swan to Ruddy Duck), Steve Laing (Red Grouse to Black-necked Grebe), Trevor Blake (Honey-buzzard to Crane), Tom Brewis (Avocet to Godwit), Ian Forsyth (Turnstone to Skua), Eddie Crabtree (Puffin to Great Black-backed Gull), Tim Dean (Escapes, Hybrids and Unknown Origin, List of Contributors, Highlights), Peter Fletcher (Feral Pigeon to Red-rumped Swallow), Mike Richardson (Cetti's Warbler to Pied Flycatcher), Alan Jack (Dunnock to Corn Bunting), Kathy Evans (WeBS Coastal Counts) and Steve Holliday (WeBS Inland Counts).

Data Manager is Tom Brewis

Thanks to David Sanders of NNBC for providing data.

Proof reading was by Mike Smith. Mail distribution by Paul Stewart.

Edited by Steve Barrett [NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com](mailto:NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com)

## RECORD SUBMISSION

Please email records for the month to [ntbc.records@googlemail.com](mailto:ntbc.records@googlemail.com)

Please email for a copy of the standard spreadsheet and other details.

Location names and grid references: Please use of standard location names and include grid references as this greatly increases the value of records in subsequent analyses. A 1km square grid reference is the ideal e.g. NY8067 for Grindon Lough, but 2km square references (tetrads) are also acceptable e.g. NY86D in this case. A list of localities and their tetrad grid references (tetrad/Locality List) can be downloaded from the 'Resources & Downloads' section of the Club website at <http://www.ntbc.org.uk> – the use of these names, wherever possible, would be highly appreciated.

Could club members ensure they to submit records direct to NTBC rather than just Birdtrack. There may be an assumption by some members this happens automatically. We do not want to miss records.

## PHOTOGRAPHS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Please keep submitting your articles, photographs, sketches and illustrations for the bulletin. Thanks again to those who have supplied the excellent photographs. Please send to Steve Barrett at [NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com](mailto:NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com)

It is preferable if you re-size your photos before sending and a suggested size is 640 x 480 pixels. Please ensure you include the following information with your submissions: name, species, date taken, locality. Photographs will not be used elsewhere without the photographer's permission.

## MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Annual membership costs £10 for a junior, £30 for an individual, and £32 for a family.

For membership enquiries please contact [ntbc@jobentley.plus.com](mailto:ntbc@jobentley.plus.com)

Membership subscriptions were due at the beginning of October. If you internet bank you can pay online: please include your name in the ref. It is helpful if you email me to let me know when you've made the transfer [ntbc@jobentley.plus.com](mailto:ntbc@jobentley.plus.com)

If you decide to set up a standing order please date the first payment at least a fortnight from your posting date to allow time to process with the bank. You can also set up your standing order directly with your bank if you wish; just let me know.

Finally, if you know anyone who might like to join NTBC please pass on the club information - new members are always welcome.

**Jo Bentley - Hon Treasurer**

## NTBC WEB SITE

The Club website is an excellent resource for all interested in birds in the north-east. There are numerous interesting sections, including a photograph gallery, site information and trip reports together with extensive reference information for birding in our area. Please submit any new content for the website to the main club email address.

## NTBC SIGHTINGS PAGE

The Sightings Page contains current reports by members. Access is from the NTBC website and an email notification is available for new postings. Members need to submit a request to be added to the website, specifying the email address they wish to post from before they can submit sightings to [ntbcorg@gmail.com](mailto:ntbcorg@gmail.com)

## INLAND WEBS COUNTERS

Inland WeBS counters needed in the future! Although there are no inland sites available at the present time it is envisaged that opportunities for taking over a site will become available during the next year or two. If you are interested in lodging your name, home location and contact details in case a site becomes open please contact Steve Holliday email [steveholiday@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:steveholiday@hotmail.co.uk)

Steve Holliday

## BIRDS IN NORTHUMBRIA

### QUICK REFERENCE TABLE OF ARTICLES INCLUDED AS BACK PAPERS

Since 1970 the annual bird report has included many useful and interesting articles on a range of topics e.g. first county sightings of a species, site reviews, species studies and so on. However, for anyone researching a particular topic or even the casual birder wanting to look up a specific paper, it can take several frustrating minutes, if not longer, before the appropriate issue containing the desired article can be found. To help overcome this problem, Steve Holliday has produced an easy reference table showing all the papers included in each annual bird report. A PDF version of the reference table can be found on the NTBC website however anyone wanting a Word version should contact Steve directly for a copy at [steveholiday@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:steveholiday@hotmail.co.uk)



# COASTAL WEBS COUNTS: NORTHUMBERLAND

		MHu M. Hutcheson		TB T. Brewis		JAR J. A. Roper		MGA M. G. Anderson													
MARCH	2016	KAE K. A. Evans		AC A. Craggs		LJM L. J. McDougall		DMT D. M. Turner													
		MLC M. L. Cadwallender / W. Dickson				KVB K. Brooks		PF P. Fletcher													
Site	TOTAL	<div>Berwick North Shore (including Little Beach)</div>	<div>Tweed Estuary</div>	<div>Whiteadder Water</div>	<div>Tweed: A1 By-Pass to Gainslaw House</div>	<div>Spittal - Cocklawburn</div>	<div>Lindisfarne NNR (including Budle Bay)</div>	<div>Budle Pt. - Seahouses</div>	<div>Seahouses - Beadnell</div>	<div>Beadnell - Howick</div>	<div>Howick - Boulmer</div>	<div>Aln Estuary</div>	<div>Cresswell - Newbiggin</div>	<div>Blyth Estuary</div>	<div>Blyth Estuary - Seaton Sluice</div>	<div>St Mary's Island</div>	<div>Tyne North Pier - Fish Quay</div>	<div>East Howdon, (north bank only)</div>	<div>Redheugh - Scotswood Bridge, (north bank)</div>	<div>Scotswood - Newburn Bridge, (north bank)</div>	
Counter		MHu	MHu	TB	TB	MHu	AC	AC	KAE	MLC	KR	JAR	TAC	MGA	LJM	KVB	SP	DMT	DMT	PF	PF
Date		10	11	20	8	14	14	13	12	11	14/15	20	12	12	22	19	14	12	31	13	13
Red-throated Diver	16					3	5		4		1		1				2				
Great Northern Diver	5						5														
Black-throated Diver	1						1														
Little Grebe	2			1													1				
Great Crested Grebe	1						1														
Slavonian Grebe	1						1														
Cormorant	136	8	2	4	4	2	29			3	6	4	4		20	1	21	20	1	4	3
Shag	17	4				1	3				7						2				
Grey Heron	47	1	11	8	6		6		1		2	1	9				2				
Mute Swan	79		32	2	5	2	29	2					8							1	
Whooper Swan	77				5					32			40								
Pink-footed Goose	139						139														
Greylag Goose	687					40	347	315			300										
Canada Goose	20		3		2								15								
Dark-bellied Brent Goose	122						122														
Light-bellied Brent Goose	648						648														
Shelduck	889						776	240			2	17	18		67		1		4	4	
Wigeon	670		3				348	120				81	236		2						
Gadwall	13														11		2				
Teal	836		4		37		550	350			10		116		18		15		4	72	10
Mallard	399		62	34	17		173	150	3	4	2	28	57		2		10			6	1
Pintail	92						92														
Shoveler	4						4														
Tufted Duck	5									1			2				2				
Eider	846	35	2			22	400	8	78	112	87	35			39	9	27				
Long-tailed Duck	15						15														
Common Scoter	118					92	18		8												
Goldeneye	113	5	73	10	5		15				1		2		2						
Red-breasted Merganser	58		4		1	2	41	6	1		2	3	4								
Goosander	33		6	13	14																
Moorhen	36			9	1		3				2		16				5				
Coot	13						3			1			6				3				
Oystercatcher	1,392	182	18		2	16	402		53	92	179	94	96	65	39	35	87	30		2	
Ringed Plover	78					2	8			1	27	1	12	12	2		12	1			
Golden Plover	448						40					8					400				
Grey Plover	164	3					98			5			48	10							
Lapwing	131						28						72				31				
Knot	351						326	100				8				17					
Sanderling	320						106			6	5	61	55	48		2	25	12			
Purple Sandpiper	323	26							40	224		12		12		2	2	5			
Dunlin	666						586					6		50			23	1			
Snipe	11						1						8				2				
Black-tailed Godwit	1						1														
Bar-tailed Godwit	132	4					110	25	1	12	5										
Curlew	1,729	34	78		19	14	610	200	6	109	222	254	193	59	48	1	73	3	2	4	
Redshank	1,096	32	226		1	3	314	80	5	21	25	51	79	62	102	25	101	7	5	35	2
Lesser Black-backed Gull	16		2				1								6					7	
Herring Gull	3,061	36	228	59	18	116	1342	350	323	200	222	26	48		134			178	10	115	6
Great Black-backed Gull	152	5	22			2	14		24	13	40		2					26		4	
Kittiwake	550										408	1						7	134		
Mediterranean Gull	1																1				
ADDITIONAL SPECIES																					
Guillemot	13	2				2			7		1				1						
Little Egret	8		1				4		1	1			1								
Fulmar	49	6							1	1	41										
TOTALS - WILDFOWL	6,057	53	202		97	164	3,774	1,191	95	153	422	169	534	0	161	10	93	20	9	87	14
- WADERS	6,842	281	322		22	35	2,630	405	105	470	463	495	563	318	191	82	756	59	7	41	2
- GULLS & TERNS	3,721	41	252		18	118	1,357	350	347	213	670	27	50	0	140	0	1	211	144	126	6





# Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

<http://www.ntbc.org.uk/>

Bulletin 2016 No 5

MONTHLY SUMMARY MAY 2016

7th July 2016



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## CLASSIFIED LIST HIGHLIGHTS

Goldeneye	Bred again at the same location with two broods this year.
Ruddy Duck	Drake at Cresswell Pond on 22nd.
Great White Egret	Adult in breeding plumage at Druridge Pools from 13th.
Glossy Ibis	Two at Newton on 27th moved on to Druridge Pools briefly next day.
Dotterel	One on Holy Island on 14th and 15th. Very scarce on coast in the county.
Broad-billed Sandpiper	One at Druridge Pools on 31st. Only second since 1999.
Little Stint	Singles at Spittal and Derwent Reservoir.
Red-necked Phalarope	Female at Grindon Lough from 19th. Possibly returning bird from last year.
Arctic Skua	Only sighting during month was a single adult at Seaton Sluice on 13th.
Great Skua	Single at Tynemouth and Seaton Sluice on 25th.
Bonaparte's Gull	First-summer at Wansbeck Estuary from 29th.
Hoopoe	Sightings at Haltwhistle on 8th and Harthope Valley on 20th.
Wryneck	One on Holy Island on 28th.
Red-backed Shrike	At least six individuals from 11th hence definite influx.
Western Subalpine Warbler	One on Holy Island from 14th to 16th.
Icterine Warbler	Popular individual at Druridge Pools on 27th.
Bluethroat	Male and female on Holy Island from 13th to 16th and an unusual record from Killingworth.
Black Redstart	Singles at Holy Island and Newbiggin.
Blue-headed Wagtail	One at Whittle Dene Reservoir on 6th.
Hooded Crow	Single at Cresswell on 5th.
Common Rosefinch	First-summer male at Druridge Pools on 27th.



The long-staying Red-necked Phalarope at Grindon Lough  
photographed by Eddie Douglas on 30th May

## INDOOR MEETINGS

NTBC indoor meetings are held at Northern Rugby Club, McCracken Park, Great North Road, Newcastle, NE3 2DT starting at 7.00pm and generally finish between 9.00pm-9.30pm. The next meeting is after the summer on Thursday September 8th.

## FIELD TRIPS

The next field trip is an autumn visit to a popular estuary:

25th September - Alnmouth

Please contact Steve Anderson for details [seaswan@btinternet.com](mailto:seaswan@btinternet.com)

## CLASSIFIED LIST

**Mute Swan** *Cygnus olor*



No love lost between a Mute Swan and a Black-headed Gull  
28th May at Gosforth Park NR by Mike Carr

The Tweed Estuary held 288 on 6th (MHu), 38 were at Killingworth Lake on 6th (DM), 22-30 at Howdon (CB) and the Wansbeck Estuary (DM), 16-20 at Amble, Cresswell Pond and Whiteadder Point (Berwick), and six to eight at Grindon Lough and Newcastle Leazes Park. Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Gosforth Park NR	1	8	NHSN
Newcastle Exhibition Park	1	8	GB. On 20th
Holy Island Lough	1	7	IK
Bothal Pond	1	7	TD. On 21st.
Swallow Pond	1	7	CDH. On 29th.
Broomlee Lough	1	6	MRS. On 24th
Little Waters	1	6	GB. On 22nd. Later moved to Big Waters

Single pairs were also noted with nests at Alnmouth, Arcot and Middle Ord Ponds, Greenlee Lough, Killingworth Lake, Shield on the Wall Dam, and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

## Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

Two adults at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 6th were seen to fly off to NW (PRM).

## Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

At Grindon Lough, one was noted on 4th and six on 24th-25th (PRM/MRS), two were at Haughton Strother GP between 3rd-8th (MR), two at Woodhorn Flashes on 7th (GB), and singles at Bothal Pond and the Tweed Estuary between 6th-8th (TD/TF/JFa/MHu).



**Greylag Goose** *Anser anser*

Peak counts were 187 at Castron on 9th (JD), 183 at Derwent Reservoir on 29th (PRM), 43-66 at Druridge Pools (DM/STH), Haughton Strother GP (GB) and Woodhorn Flashes (MR), 19-27 at Derwent Reservoir, Grindon Lough, Hartley West Farm and Plenmeller Common. Five to eight were also at Bothal and Linton Ponds, and Cocklawburn, and two to three at Bewick Moor, Corbridge, Greenlee Lough and Swallow Pond. Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Haughton Strother GP	5	27	MR
Branton GP	5	24	LJM. On 10th
Woodhorn Flashes	1	9	GB. On 7th
Middle Ord Pond, Berwick	1	6	MHu. On 22nd
Plenmeller Common	1	4	DM/ALT/HD. Tiny young on 7th.

**Canada Goose** *Branta canadensis*

A peak of 70 was at Grindon Lough on 25th (PRM), 56 were at Castle Island on 28th (DM/STH), 34 (including two on nests) at Linton Ponds on 8th (CDH), and 12-20 at Big Waters, Bothal and Swallow Ponds, Druridge Pools and Newcastle Leazes Park. Two to six were also at Alnmouth, Killingworth Lake and Wooler, and one was at the Tweed Estuary on 6th (MHu). Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Marden Quarry	2	6 (4,2)	KWY. On 22nd
Duke's Pond, Rising Sun CP	1	9	CDH. On 29th
Bank's Pond, Dinnington	1	7	PCF/STH. On 15th
Big Waters	1	5	GB. On 15th
Castle Island	1	3	DM/STH. On 30th
Haughton Strother GP	1	3	MR. On 21st
Branton GP	1	2	LJM. On 10th
Newcastle Leazes Park	1	1	DM. On 28th.

**Barnacle Goose** *Branta leucopsis*

Two flew W at Cresswell Pond on 5th (ADM), and one was at Hedgeley GP on 1st (IBDa/KDa).

**Brent Goose** *Branta bernicla*

Six pale-bellied *hrota* race birds were at Druridge Pools on 14th (PCF) and one was at Beal saltmarsh all month. A single dark-bellied *bernicla* race bird was near Holy Island Lough throughout. The latter two birds were both thought to be sick/injured and unable to migrate (IK).

**Shelduck** *Tadorna tadorna*

Ten flew S at Cocklawburn on 9th (MHu) and two N at Whitley Bay on 6th (IJ). Budle Bay attracted 78 on 28th (CGK), 30 were at the Blyth Estuary on 8th (LJM), and 12-16 at Alnmouth, Bell's and Cresswell Ponds, Castle Island, Foxton and Howdon. Six to eight were at the Coquet Estuary and Druridge Pools, and three to five at Newbiggin and the Tweed Estuary. One to two were also found at Berwick Little Beach, Bothal and Swallow Ponds, the Blyth Estuary, Lynemouth flash, West Chevington, the Wansbeck Estuary, West Hartford and Widdrington. Further inland, four were at Haughton Strother GP, and one to two at Corbridge, Greenlee and Grindon Loughs, and Mootlaw Quarry. More unusual were two at Derwent Reservoir on 3rd, a site where the species is typically scarce (IFo). Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Cresswell Pond	4+	37+	TD/TRD/JD. On 27th-28th

**Wigeon** *Anas penelope*

Grindon Lough held a peak of 24 on 24th (MRS), and ten to 23 (up to 17 drakes) regularly during the month (PRM). Ten were at Derwent Reservoir on 29th (PRM), up to eight at Druridge Pools until 30th (TB/TD/DM et al.), five to six at Budle Bay, Plenmeller Common, and the Tweed Estuary, and one to two at Branton GP, Cresswell Pond, Haughton Strother GP, Hoppen Kiln Flash, Low Newton and Monks' House Pool. Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Derwent Reservoir	2+	10+	Brood of 8 young on 22nd (JL). Presumed same reduced to six by 24th when a further brood of two was noted (IFo). Brood of six still present on 29th (PRM).

**Gadwall** *Anas strepera*

On 6th, a pair flew off the River Tyne and then N at Tynemouth (DRW), and were also noted flying N and then back S at Whitley Bay (IJ). Moderate peak counts involved 17 at Bell's Pond on 7th (GB), 15 at Castle Island on 14th (GB), 13-14 at Bothal Pond and Newton Pool (DGB/TD), and ten to 12 at Low Newton scrape and Woodhorn Flashes. Five to six were at the Blyth Estuary, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools and East Chevington, and three to four at Big Waters, Grindon Lough, Howdon and Swallow Pond. One to two were also found at Arcot, Holywell and Linton Ponds, Branton GP, Castron, Holy Island Lough, Lynemouth flash, the Tweed Estuary and Whitley Bay.

**Teal** *Anas crecca*

Grindon Lough was the top site, with a peak of 29 (16 drakes) on 4th, seven on 15th and four on 25th (PRM), and 11 were at Plenmeller Common on 7th (DM/ALT/HD). Elsewhere, small numbers lingered, mostly in lowland areas, with eight at Big Waters on 2nd (four remaining until 15th; GB), up to eight at Druridge Pools (all month; GB/TRD/DM) and Low Newton (TD), three to four at Derwent Reservoir and Hoppen Kiln Flash (until 30th), and one to two at Bothal and Cresswell Ponds, Castle Island, Howdon, Monks' House Pool, the Tweed Estuary and West Hartford.

**Mallard** *Anas platyrhynchos*

59 were at Whiteadder Point, Berwick on 7th (TBr), 34 at Derwent Reservoir on 29th, 22-28 at Grindon Lough, Newcastle Leazes Park and the Tweed Estuary, and 11-13 at Killingworth Lake and Lynemouth flash. Breeding data were as follows (additional to April unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Holywell Dene/Estuary	5	10+	RJP
Derwent Reservoir	3	24 (9,8,7)	IFo.
Newcastle Leazes Park	3	17 (11,4,2)	DM. Brood of 11 (as April?) and new broods of four and two
Big Waters	3	12-13	GB
Newcastle Civic Centre	2	13 (8,5)	DM
Grindon Lough	1-2	10-18	PRM/MRS
Gosforth Park NR	1	11	NHSN. New brood on 14th, also several older broods present
Druridge Pools	1	9	TD
Bothal Pond	1	7	TD.
Rothbury	1	7	JMA
Swallow Pond	1	7	DM
Marden Quarry	1	4	KWY
Newcastle Exhibition Park	1	4	DM
Wylam	1	2	CDB

**Pintail** *Anas acuta*

One was at Fenham Flats on 8th (IBDa/KDa).

**Garganey** *Anas querquedula*

An interesting sea-watching record concerned a drake that flew N close inshore at Tynemouth on 1st (MK/DRW). More typical were singles (all drakes where specified) at Cresswell Pond on 7th and 15th (TB/TF/JFa/ADMc), Druridge Pools on 14th-15th (TB/PCF/TF/JFa) and 30th-31st (PRM/ADMc), and Low Newton scrape on 10th (IBDa/KDa). A drake was on the River Wansbeck at Castle Island on 27th (TRD/JD).

**Shoveler** *Anas clypeata*

Few were noted, with four drakes at Cresswell Pond on 7th (GB), six (four drakes) at Druridge Pools on 26th and up to three there regularly (TRD/JD/ADMc), and singles at Howdon, Linton Ponds and Low Newton scrape. Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Druridge Pools	2	14 (9,5)	ADMc. On 26th. Brood of seven young on 28th same as brood of nine (with two predated)? (TD)

**Pochard** *Aythya ferina*

Moderate numbers included ten (eight drakes) at Big Waters on 2nd, where display and copulation was noted (GB), ten at Swallow Pond on 6th (DM/STH), and fours at Arcot Pond (DM/STH), Bothal Pond (TF/JFa) and Gosforth Park NR (NHSN/KWY).

**Tufted Duck** *Aythya fuligula*

23 were at Haughton Strother GP on 5th (MR), 22 at Killingworth Lake on 6th (DM), 21 at Bothal Pond on 2nd (TF/JFa), and 12-20 at Grindon Lough, Linton and Swallow Ponds, Monks' House Pool, and Newcastle Leazes Park. Five to nine were also at Arcot Pond, Derwent and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, Gosforth Park NR and Howdon, and two to four at ten further sites including the Tweed Estuary. More unusual was a pair in Holywell Dene on 22nd (RJP). A duck at Killingworth Lake on 11th had what appeared to be a bracelet trapped around its' neck (GB).

**Scaup** *Aythya marila*

A female was at Killingworth Lake on 4th (GB) and 6th (DM).



**Eider** *Somateria mollissima*

75, mostly adult drakes, were at Holy Island on 24th (IK), 75 (74 drakes) at North Blyth on 28th (STH), 22 at Newbiggin (GB), 14 drakes at the Tweed Estuary, and seven at Berwick North Shore. Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods/crèches	No. of young	Observer/notes
Budle Bay	1	23	CGK. On 28th.
Holy Island	1	4	IK. Small young at Sandham Bay on 26th

**Long-tailed Duck** *Clangula hyemalis*

One flew N at Seaton Sluice on 13th (SSWT).

**Common Scoter** *Melanitta nigra*

Passage at Seaton Sluice involved a total of 82 N from 25th (SSWT), and one to seven flew N at Newbiggin and Snab Point. Few were noted otherwise, with 15 off Cullernose Point on 28th (TRD/JD), and one to four at Cocklawburn, Newbiggin, Seahouses and Stag Rocks.

**Goldeneye** *Bucephala clangula*

One was at Cresswell Pond regularly between 1st-27th (TB/TD/TRD et al.), and one was at Caistron on 9th (JD). Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
North Northumberland	2	7 (5,2)	JD/LJM et al. A duck accompanied two very small young on 10th (two drakes and three ducks also present). A new brood of five young noted on 21st.

**Red-breasted Merganser** *Mergus serrator*

Ten were at Budle Bay on 9th (GPK), five at East Chevington on 7th-8th (TRD/JD/TF/JFa) and one to three there until 14th (TB/TRD/JL), four at the Blyth Estuary on 2nd (STH), and two at Budle Bay. An individual in fields W of Grindon Lough on 25th was considered to be an escapee that has recently been seen in Cumbria (PRM).

**Goosander** *Mergus merganser*

Four drakes flew N over the Tyne Estuary on 27th (MK), and singles flew N at Tynemouth (DRW) and Whitley Bay (IJ) on 6th, and off Druridge on 28th (TF/JFa). A count of 92 at New Water Haugh on the River Tweed on 1st contained 90% males (MHu). The next largest gathering was 23 at Horncliffe on 13th (JDL), 11 flew out to sea at Berwick Little Beach on 11th (MHu), and six to nine were at Holy Island, the Tweed Estuary and Whiteadder Point (Berwick). Counts of three came from Chollerford, Happy Valley and Meadow Haven (Berwick). One to two were at Airy Holm Reservoir, Allen Banks, Big Waters, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Merryshields GP, Newbrough, Warden, Wark and Warkworth. Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Haughton Strother GP	1	8	MR. On 23rd
Low Angerton	1	2	IRD. On 8th.

**Ruddy Duck** *Oxyura jamaicensis*

A surprise find was a drake at Cresswell Pond on 22nd (TB/TF/JFa/ADM), which was also noted on 23rd (ADM).

**Quail** *Coturnix coturnix*

The first record of the year was one heard calling from a cereal field N of Big Waters NWT on 15th (GB et al.) followed by singles at Cornhill-on-Tweed on 20th (JDL) and Swinhoe (Beadnell) on 21st (JPL).

**Red-legged Partridge** *Alectoris rufa*

40+ were present in the Carey Burn area (Harthope Valley) on 5th (MJC) and two were in a Rothbury garden on several days at the end of the month (TRD/JD). Singles were also at Druridge Lane – running down the road in front of the observer's car - and Lough House (Longhorsley).

**Red Grouse** *Lagopus lagopus*

The peak count during the month was 40+ at Allendale Common on 7th (DM/ALT/HD) followed by 30+ at Swinhope Moor (Allendale Common) on 22nd (JL). Other reports were "common" in Allendale on 8th (ASJ), six at Pithouse Fell on 7th, four in the Harthope Valley on 16th (TRD/JD) and singles at Acton Fell (Blanchland Moor) and Bowden Doors (Belford).

**Black Grouse** *Tetrao tetrix*

Four at Ropehaugh (Allendale) on 8th (ASJ) and one at Shieldbridge (Allendale) on 7th (DM/ALT/HD) were the only records.

**Grey Partridge** *Perdix perdix*

Four were in the fields near QE11 CP on 11th (TB), but otherwise it was mostly pairs seen at various locations including Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Earsdon, Holy Island (at both The Snook and Chare Ends), Loanend (Horndcliffe), Pegswood, Prestwick Carr, Rising Sun CP, Swinhope Shield and West Hartford. Singles were at Cresswell, the Long Nanny and Woodhorn Village.

**Pheasant** *Phasianus colchicus*

Eight were at feeders at Nunnykirk on 7th (DM/ALT/HD) and five were at West Hartford on 6th. At Holywell Dene, and mostly around Hartley West Farm, two birds were regularly seen throughout the month and three nests with eggs were located (RJP). A single male was at Eachwick on 1st (CDB).

**Red-throated Diver** *Gavia stellata*

At Seaton Sluice, the monthly total was 16 N in 28hrs of sea watching, the majority being between 24th-27th (SSWT). Three were in summer plumage at Snab Point (Cresswell) on 13th (TRD) and one to two were recorded on many other dates from various other coastal locations.

**Great Northern Diver** *Gavia immer*

Seaton Sluice Watch Tower reported an exceptional run of records with four N between 12th-14th and two N together on 25th, all in full summer plumage (SSWT). Further reports were received of full summer-plumaged singles flying N on several days from various coastal locations.

**Fulmar** *Fulmarus glacialis*

The maximum count from Seaton Sluice was 240 N in three hours on 25th, otherwise no large-scale movements (SSWT). 40 were near Cresswell Pond area on 28th, with a similar number at Cullernose Point on 29th (TRD/JD). Numbers were reduced at Whitley Bay Cliffs with only two pairs present on 4th (JMA). One to two birds were also at Druridge, Seahouses Harbour, Snab Point (Cresswell) and the Tweed Estuary.



Fulmars at Cullernose Point by Janet Dean, 29th May

**Manx Shearwater** *Puffinus puffinus*

A monthly total of 111 N and two S were recorded during 28 hours of watching at Seaton Sluice, the majority on the dates of 12th-14th and 24th-27th (SSWT). These peak dates were reflected by other observers, with 13 N past Snab Point (Cresswell) in one hour on 24th (JL), nine N at that location on 26th (TRD/JD), two S past Stag Rocks (TM) and, all on 14th, four N past Snab Point (GB), six N past Tynemouth (DRW) and three N at Cullercoats (IJ). Two flew N past Tynemouth on 21st and singles were seen at Holy Island and Druridge at the end of the month.

**Gannet** *Morus bassanus*

Up to 630 per hour N passed Berwick Pier during the morning of 25th (MHu). Seaton Sluice Watch Tower recorded no large scale movements, the maximum being 160 N in one hour on 27th (SSWT). Other reports included 70+ N past Newbiggin Point from 15.00–16.00 hrs on 30th (ASH), 40 N at Newton Point on 15th, 30 at East Chevington on 13th, 20 N at Snab Point on 26th (TRD/JD) and 13N and seven S past Snab Point on 7th.

**Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo*

WeBS counts produced 16 at Berwick North Shore on 3rd and 12 in the River Tweed Estuary on 6th (MHu). 12 were also at the Meadow Haven roost (Berwick) on 1st. Eight was the monthly maximum at Derwent Reservoir (IFo/PRM) and six the maximum at Castle Island on 28th (DM/STH). One to five were at several other locations including one watched catching and eventually swallowing a large eel at Big Waters (GB).



**Shag** *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

The only records from Seaton Sluice were six N, all between 24th-26th (SSWT). In the Berwick area, ten were found during a WeBS count at Berwick North Shore on 3rd and seven were at Meadow Haven on 1st (MHu). Singles were at Cullernose Point and Snab Point (Cresswell) (TRD/JD).

**Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta*

Five at Castle Island (River Wansbeck) was the highest count this month with one to three at many other, mainly coastal, locations including the first recorded sighting at Howdon (CB) and a colour ringed bird – right leg, yellow “T”; left leg, red “F” – at the Budge Fields (Druridge Bay) on the 29th and 30th (ADMc).

**Great White Egret** *Ardea alba*

A popular individual arrived at Druridge Pools on 13th and was still present on 29th (TB/TRD/AA *et al.*).

Two Egrets photographed by Tim Dean at Druridge Pools.

Top: a Little on 27th May and below: a great White on 13th May

**Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea*

The highest counts were 14 at Whiteadder Point (Berwick) on 7th (TBr), ten at the River Tweed Estuary on 6th (MHu) - both WeBS counts – and at least ten present on nests at a Heronry at Wark (North Tyne) on 15th (PRM). Eight were at Howdon on 23rd (CB) and seven at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 6th. Gosforth Park NR held at least five during the month including three recently fledged young (NHSN). One to two were at several other localities.

**Glossy Ibis** *Plegadis falcinellus*

Two were found at Low Newton Scrape on the evening of 27th where they remained overnight, leaving in the morning of 28th to visit Druridge Pools at 11:40 am for an hour and a half, before flying off S. Over the following few days they were sighted at Durham, Teesside, East Yorkshire, Norfolk and Suffolk! (TB/TRD/JD/TF/JFa).

**Little Grebe** *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Four were present at Arcot Pond (DM), Linton Ponds (CDH) and Castron (JD) and three were at Branton GP and Bothal Pond (Coney Garth). Breeding records came from Mootlaw Quarry (Ryal) with an adult feeding a single large chick on 31st (ALT) and Gosforth Park NR with one juvenile seen eating smooth newts (NHSN). One to two were at several other locations.

The Glossy Ibis at Druridge Pools  
by Jonathan Farooqi  
28th May

**Great Crested Grebe** *Podiceps Cristatus*

Derwent Reservoir held up to eight adults on 29th (PRM) and seven were at East Chevington North Pool on 4th (TB). At Killingworth Lake a pair with four young on 16th was reduced to three on 18th, then two by the month's end (ASJ/GB) whilst a second pair were also incubating two eggs. A pair at Big Waters NWT had two tiny chicks by 21st and a pair at Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) had a single chick. One to three were also at Airy Holm Reservoir, Branton GP, Budle Point, Castron, Druridge Pools, Holy Island and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

**Black-necked Grebe** *Podiceps nigrocollis*

Two were present at Grindon Lough on 11th, the only date they were seen all month there (PRM), and two were reported at three further sites in South East Northumberland.

**Red Kite** *Milvus Milvus*

Two birds were at Stocksfield on 5th (IK) and single birds were at Corbridge on 7th (RB/MB), Lowick on 15th (EHa), Hexham on 17th (MR), Winnows Hill (Slaley) on 20th (JSB/EC), Derwent Reservoir on 24th (JSB/EC) and at Snods Edge on 31st (IFo).

**Marsh Harrier** *Circus aeruginosus*

A pair was noted food passing at East Chevington on 14th (TB) and singles noted there on several dates (AJN/TRD/TB). Single birds were also at Cresswell Pond on 2nd (TB), New Mills (near Berwick) on 5th (BWG) and at East Moor (Ellington) on 30th (TB).

**Hen Harrier** *Circus cyaneus*

Several sightings of a 2nd calendar year male came from Holy Island during the month (MJC *et al.*) and a single bird was noted at Brownieside on 21st (NNBC).

**Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter nisus*

Only single birds were seen this month at Ashington, Big Waters NWT, Bothal Pond, Castle Island, Cramlington, Ellington, Hedgeley GPs, Holywell Dene, Jesmond Dene, Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay) and at Newbiggin. A nest with young in the nest was noted at Cowpen (Blyth) (IK/ASH).

**Common Buzzard** *Buteo buteo*

Four birds were in the Carey Burn (Harthope Valley) on 5th (MJC) and two birds were at Heiferlaw (Alnwick) and Hulne Park (Alnwick) on 5th (JMA), Wylam on 6th (RMHa/PMHa), Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) and Eachwick on 8th (TB/CDB), Grindon Lough on 11th (PRM), Longframlington on 27th (JMA) and at Wark (North Tyne) on 31st (PRM). Single birds were reported from 19 sites including a bird being mobbed by Carrion Crows *Corvus corone* on Holy Island on 28th (IK).

**Osprey** *Pandion haliaetuss*

Single birds were seen at Derwent Reservoir on 3rd (IFo), Budle Bay (GPK) and Horsley Wood (Wylam) on 5th (RMHa/PMHa), Haughton Strother GPS (Humshaugh) on several dates (MR), Alnmouth on 15th (SCa) and at Ross Links on 17th (GPK).

**Water Rail** *Rallus aquaticus*

Gosforth Park NR peaked at four birds on 7th (DM/ALT/HD/NHSN). The only other record came from Big waters NWT on 19th with a bird calling (GB).

**Moorhen** *Gallinula chloropus*

Nine birds consisting of 3ads and 6 young were at Walltown Quarry on 30th (PRM) and four pairs were nesting at Grindon Lough throughout the month (PRM). One to five birds were at Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Grindon Lough, Holywell Dene, Leazes Park (Newcastle), St Mary's Wetland, Swallow Pond (Wallsend), West Hartford and at Wylam.

**Coot** *Fulica atra*

32 birds were at Bothal Pond on 21st (TD) and 12 birds were at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 4th and Swallow Pond (Wallsend) on 6th (DM). One to eight birds were at Arcot Pond, Big Waters NWT, Dukes Pond (Wallsend), Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Grindon Lough, Killingworth Lake, Leazes Park (Newcastle), Linton Pond, Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay), Monks House Pool, Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) and Swallow Pond (Wallsend).

**Avocet** *Recurvirostra avosetta*

Up to a maximum of four birds were reported from Cresswell Pond at different dates throughout the month (IRD, TB). Reports of up to three birds from the R. Wansbeck on 30th may have included some of the Creswell birds (TB, DM/STH). Additional records at different dates (TB) came from two or three sites in the south east of the county. No details of breeding were received.

**Oystercatcher** *Haematopus ostralegus*

Reports involving breeding came from Redesmouth Bridge where a nest with three eggs was seen on 8th (IRD), from Branton GP where two well-grown young were noted on 10th (LJM) and at Cramlington, where a pair were recorded (DM). Non-breeding birds numbered 150 on 16th at Holy Island (IK), while on 27th, 36 were reported on the Tweed Estuary (MHu) and 34 birds on 3rd were seen on Berwick North Shore (MHu). Other coastal counts included 32 at Newbiggin on 17th (STH) and 27 at North Blyth staithes on 28th (STH), as well as Cresswell Pond on 7th where 16 birds were seen (DM/ALT/HD). A further 12 birds were recorded at Kitty Brewster on 22nd. Smaller coastal counts of ten or fewer came from Spital (Newbiggin) and Little Beach (Berwick). The largest inland count was of 28 birds at Derwent Reservoir on 29th (PRM), while 23 roosting birds were reported from Haughton Strother GP on 5th (MR). Reports of up to nine birds came from a range of sites: Amble, Arcot Pond, Berwick (Whiteadder Point), Bothal Pond, Black Middens (Tynemouth), Blagdon (Brenkley), Corbridge (Aydon), Greenlee Lough, Grindon Lough, Linton Ponds, Monks' House, Mootlaw Quarry (Ryal), Swallow Pond, West Hartford and Whittle Dene Reservoir.



**Golden Plover** *Pluvialis apricaria*

Eight "northern" birds, most in full breeding plumage, were noted on 14th at Holy Island (IK). A single was noted at Meadow Cottage (Allendale) on 7th and another at Druridge Pools on 16th (TB). No other reports were received.

**Grey Plover** *Pluvialis squatarola*

Eighty birds were seen on passage at Lindisfarne NNR, Ross, Black Law on 2nd (IK), all in full breeding plumage. On 14th, 48 were noted at Budle Bay (CGK) and six were on Holy Island on 15th (TF/JFa).



A Lapwing chick on Holy Island on 4th May by Tim Dean

**Lapwing** *Vanellus vanellus*

Acton Moor (Allendale) held more than 110 birds on the 8th including many pairs with young (ASJ). About 20 birds were reported from Grindon Lough between 4th and 24th with eight nesting pairs recorded (PRM). Six pairs (some with chicks) were seen at Backworth (ASJ). Four pairs with broods were seen on Holy Island on 14th (IK), while three pairs were seen displaying near Ford on 8th (TBr) and another three pairs were noted displaying near Woodhorn on 14th (GB). Two pairs were reported on 14th from Arcot Lane (DM) and one pair showed agitated behaviour, suggesting nearby young at Arcot Pond (DM). Single pairs were recorded at Rising Sun CP on 6th and at Beacon Hill (Cramlington) on 14th. Five birds were seen displaying at Goswick Farm (TBr) on 11th and on 26th an adult on Holy Island (IK) was seen driving off a Short-eared Owl and a Roe Deer in quick succession when chicks were threatened. On 12th a dog disturbed a possible nesting site at Holywell Dene. Other records without any breeding evidence reported were from: Druridge Pools (30+ on 22nd, TD) and six or fewer birds from Bothal Pond, Derwent Reservoir, Blagdon (Brenkley), Redesdale (Silloans Farm), and Corbridge (Aydon).

**Little Ringed Plover** *Charadrius dubius*

Five confidential sites held potential breeding birds, all in the west of the county with numbers reaching five at one location. Toward the coast, two birds were sighted at each of Druridge Pools on 28th (TB) and Castle Island on 29th and 30th (TF/JFa, TB, DM/STH). Other sites where singles were seen were Blagdon, Brenkley (1st), Lynemouth Flash (2nd), Gosforth Park NR (15th) and Cresswell Pond (16th).

**Ringed Plover** *Charadrius hiaticula*

A strong movement of birds was observed at Blyth Estuary on 8th when 307 were counted (LJM). Smaller movements were noted at Kitty Brewster on 22nd when ca.130 birds were seen (DM/STH), on the Tweed Estuary on 27th when 36 birds were seen (MHu), on 7th at Boulmer with 26 reported (DM/ALT/HD) and at Wansbeck Estuary on 30th when 24 birds were noted (HP). In and around Chevington Burn 15 birds were observed on 22nd (TD), up to ten birds were seen all month at the Derwent Reservoir (IFo) and eight were at Cresswell Pond and Druridge Pools on 7th and 8th, respectively. Counts of six or less were reported from: Beadnell Flash, Blagdon (Brenkley), Cocklawburn, East Chevington, Gosforth Park NR, Grindon Lough, Humshaugh (Haughton Strothers GP), Low Newton Scrape, Newbiggin (Spital) and Newton (Long Nanny). The only report of breeding was from North Blyth on 21st where a nesting pair were seen (PCF).

**Dotterel** *Charadrius morinellus*

A single male was found on Holy Island (MJC/ADM) on 14th feeding with Golden Plover. Reports of the bird continued into the next day.

**Whimbrel** *Numenius phaeopus*

Sightings were reported throughout the month with the biggest count occurring on 6th at East Chevington when 17 birds were seen (JL). West Stobswood Pool saw 15 on 4th (ADM), while Druridge Lane saw 11 birds on 14th (TB), eight were recorded at East Chevington on 10th (JSB/EC) and nine were reported from Druridge Pools on 22nd (TF/JFa). Six birds were reported each from East Stobswood Pool on 4th (TB) and at St Mary's Island on 14th (CB).

The maximum count at Budle Bay was five on 5th (GPK) while counts of four or fewer at various dates came from Blyth Estuary, Cocklawburn, Cresswell Pond, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Bay, East Chevington, Fenham Flats, Goswick, Holy Island, Newbiggin, Prestwick Carr, St Mary's Island, Snab Point and Tynemouth.

#### **Curlew** *Numenius arquata*

Ten pairs were seen on Acton Moor (Allendale) on 8th (ASJ). Twenty two birds were reported from Druridge Pool on 28th. An evening roost of 17 birds was recorded at Grindon Lough on 4th (PRM) and another 17 at Druridge Pools on 22nd (TB). The Tweed Estuary held 16 birds on 6th (MHu) while Cresswell Pond had 12 birds on 7th (GB) and 11 on 18th (STH). Suggested breeding occurred at Grindon Lough on 11th when two pairs were reported (PRM), while reports of single pairs came from Blanchland on 2nd, Derwent Reservoir also on 2nd, Wark (North Tyne) on 2nd, Slaley Forest on 17th, Winnows Hill (Slaley) on 29th and at Walltown Quarry on 30th. Other single-figure reports came from Arcot Lane, Bellshiel Laws (Redesdale) on 7th, Derwent Reservoir on 29th, Eachwick (near Ponteland) on 1st, Langleeford on 9th, Howdon on 8th and 15th, Longhorsley Moor (seeing off a Carrion Crow) on 17th, Pithouse Fell, West Hartford, Whitley Bay and Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 6th.

#### **Black-tailed Godwit** *Limosa limosa*

The highest counts came from Druridge Pools where a peak of ten was counted on 27th (TF/JFa), a number which declined to six on 31st (TRD). Grindon Lough bucked the trend of the usual coastal sightings with three birds on 4th (PRM). Singles were recorded on various dates at: Budle Bay, Cresswell Pond, Gosforth Park NR and Holy Island.

#### **Bar-tailed Godwit** *Limosa lapponica*

Reports of the Holy Island roost varied between 120-135 birds (CGK/GPK *et al.*, NFO) with all but three birds in breeding plumage (IK). Singles were reported from Boulmer on 5th and East Chevington on 6th.

#### **Turnstone** *Arenaria interpres*

Numbers declined this month as birds headed back to breeding areas the largest counts being 50 at Stag Rocks and 30 at Boulmer on 7th (DM/ALT), 24 at Low Newton on 2nd (TD) and 12 at St Mary's on 3rd. Six to eight were at Cocklawburn, Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) and Newbiggin from 2nd-14th. The last were two at Cresswell Pond on 26th.

#### **Knot** *Calidris canutus*

Lindisfarne held the largest flocks with 400 at Black Law on 2nd (IK) and ca.200 in a high tide roost at St Cuthbert's Island on 14th, all but one in winter plumage. One to three were at Budle Bay, Druridge Pools and Seaton Sluice from 5th-27th.

#### **Ruff** *Calidris pugnax*

Birds were present in the Druridge Bay area all month with the largest count being five at Druridge Pools on 28th (TF/JFa/*et al.*) and four at Cresswell Pond from 4th-5th (STH/IFo/TB). Elsewhere, three were at Low Newton scrape on 27th and a single inland at Grindon Lough on 15th.

#### **Broad-billed Sandpiper** *Limicola falcinellus*

A short-staying adult from 1100-1200h on 31st at Druridge Pools was an excellent find for this extremely rare visitor to the county (PRM).

#### **Sanderling** *Calidris alba*

At Seaton Sluice the monthly total of north-bound birds was 200 including and 'exceptional' 137 north on 31st (SSWT). The maximum count from the north of the county was 130 breeding plumage birds at Sandham Bay (Holy Island) on 25th (IK). In the south east, 24 were at St Mary's on 3rd and 23 at Newbiggin on 17th. On 24th 16 were at Low Newton. Two to ten were in the Druridge Bay area up to 21st. An interesting inland record was one at Grindon Lough on 7th (PRM).

#### **Dunlin** *Calidris alpina*

Passage at the Blyth Estuary saw 20 on 2nd increase to 164 on 8th (LJM) decreasing to 15 by 22nd (DM/STH). At Cresswell Pond, 52 on 7th had reduced to four by 13th.

The maximum at Boulmer was 48 on 7th (DM/ALT). A poor spring passage was noted at Budle Bay with no more than 15 noted throughout May (LJM). One to four were at seven other typical coastal sites. Inland a maximum of five was noted at Grindon Lough on 20th with one to four present on dates between 4th-25th. Singles were inland at Gosforth Park, Haughton Strother GP and Derwent Reservoir between 5th-13th,

#### **Purple Sandpiper** *Calidris maritima*

The peak count was 90 at the favoured Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 6th declining to 26 by 25th (GPK/JDL/TM). In the south east, 18 at Tynemouth on 14th (DRW), 14 were at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) on 2nd (IJ) and a maximum of seven at Newbiggin on 7th.

Elsewhere six were at Low Newton on 7th.

#### **Little Stint** *Calidris minuta*

Light spring passage was noted with an adult in full breeding plumage seen at Derwent Reservoir on 16th (IFo) and one seen on a roadside pool north of Druridge on 26th (TRD/JD).

#### **Red-necked Phalarope** *Phalaropus lobatus*

A female found at the western end of Grindon Lough on 19th departed after 40 minutes (PRM). This bird or another appeared at the same location from 29th-30th. (STH/MRS/AA).



**Common Sandpiper** *Actitis hypoleucos*

Birds quickly became established in breeding areas with nine pairs in Upper Coquetdale by 10th (ASJ), six birds at Derwent Reservoir on 6th (IFo) and six at the River Breamish Valley on 10th (LJM). Two pairs were in the Harthope Valley, Clennel (River Alwin) and Slaggyford and single pairs at Bakethin and Shillmoor. Three birds were at Humshaugh, Merryshields GP, College Valley, Ingram and Branton GP. Singles were on the River Allen at Cupola Bridge and Ninebanks. On lower ground one to two birds were seen at Woodhorn Flashes, Tynemouth, Hauxley, Hulne Park, Hoppen Kiln Flash, Whittle Dene Reservoirs, Budle Bay, Big Waters, Cocklawburn Pond, Cresswell Pond, Horncliffe, Castle Island, Berwick and Corbridge, between 1st -30th.

**Green Sandpiper** *Tringa ochropus*

A single in Budle Bay on 5th (GPK) was the only report.

**Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia*

Passage was concentrated between 5th-15th with two at Bell's Pond (TRD) on 13th and Holy Island on 15th (TF/JFa). On the coast singles were at Cresswell Pond, Budle Bay and Druridge Pools. Inland one was Corbridge between 5th-7th and Branton GP on 12th. The last bird of the month was at Beal on 27th.

**Wood Sandpiper** *Tringa glareola*

The first bird of the spring was at Backworth on 11th (CGK). Further singles were at Hedgeley GP on 12th (IBDa/KDa), Beadnell Flash on 14th (TRD/JD), Monks' House Pool on 19th (TRD/JD), Low Newton scrape on 27th and Druridge pools on 28-31st (TB/TRD).

**Redshank** *Tringa totanus*

A return to breeding areas was apparent as nine at Howdon on 1st declined to one by 15th. (CB). The maximum at Grindon Lough during the month was 14 on 7th (PRM) and four were at Derwent Reservoir all month (IFo). Other birds on potential breeding territories were two pairs at Slaggyford (AJR) and a pair at Winnows Hill, Slaley (PRM). Single birds were on Allendale Common and Plenmeller Common on 7th (DM/ALT). At the coast, the only counts received were a maximum of six at Cresswell Pond on 3rd, three at the Tweed Estuary on 6th and two at Druridge Pools on 30th. One was at Gosforth Park NR on 17th.

**Woodcock** *Scolopax rusticola*

Roding birds were in evidence this month with two at both Plankey Mill on 18th (SW) and Winnow's Hill, Slaley on 29th (PRM). Single roding males were at Grindon Lough on 4th (PRM), Allen Banks on 11th (SW), Beanley Wood on 23rd (IBDa/KDa) and Derwent Reservoir on 29th (PRM). Singles were at Slaley Forest and Dipton Woods on 7th and Thrunton Woods on 31st

**Snipe** *Gallinago gallinago*

Two 'drumming' males were at Grindon Lough on 4th, Allendale Common on 7th (DM/ALT) and Winnow's Hill, Slaley on 29th (PRM). Single 'drumming' birds were at Pithouse Fell, Sipton Burn and Plenmeller Common on 7th (DM/ALT). The maximum counts elsewhere were three at Prestwick Carr on 3rd (PCF) and two at Howdon on 5th (CB). Singles were at Arcot Pond, two sites in Berwick and Druridge Pools.

**Arctic Skua** *Stercorarius parasiticus*

A dark-phase bird north at Seaton Sluice on 13th was the first and only report (SSWT).

**Great Skua** *Stercorarius skua*

Reports of singles north on 25th at Tynemouth (MK), Seaton Sluice (SSWT) and Dunstanburgh (TM). One flew north at Newbiggin on 30th (ASH).

**Puffin** *Fratercula arctica*

The species was particularly noticeable at Seaton Sluice from 25th, with by far the highest daily count of 150 N in one hour on 27th (SSWT). Small groups were noted moving N and S off Castle Point (Holy Island) on 23rd, comprising feeding trips to and from Berwick Bay (IK). Elsewhere, one to three were recorded from Bamburgh, Cresswell and Tynemouth. (TRD/JD/DRW/DM).

**Guillemot** *Uria aalge*/**Razorbill** *Alca torda*

Some large movements N at Seaton Sluice, the vast majority Guillemots, from 12th-14th with maximum hourly counts of up to 2,200 and further large movements N took place from 27th-31st with a maximum rate of 500 in an hour (SSWT).

**Razorbill** *Alca torda*

At Seaton Sluice, passage N was observed of 125 and 290 in two hours on 31st and 30th respectively (SSWT) but few were recorded elsewhere, with up to five at Cullernose Point, Cresswell and East Chevington (TRD/JD).

**Guillemot** *Uria aalge*

The significant auk movement N on 30th and 31st included 800 and 185 respectively in two hours at Seaton Sluice (SSWT) and, at East Chevington on 13th, 200 were counted passing N in small groups (TRD); further north, 780 per hour moved N at Berwick Pier on 14th (MHu). At Cresswell, Snab Point, 50 were on the sea on 26th and 20 were at Newton Point on 14th (TRD/JD) with up to ten at five other localities.

**Little Tern** *Sternula albifrons*

The first returning birds were four at the Long Nanny on 2nd (TD) with up to seven recorded there on a number of later dates up to the end of the month (TRD/JD/STH/IFo). At Guile Point (Lindisfarne NNR), a maximum count of eight came on 8th (IBDa/KDa) with, elsewhere on the island, six in the Harbour and at Castle Point, described as 'no doubt from Black Law colony' (IK).

**Black Tern** *Chlidonias niger*

Three were recorded flying S at Whitley Bay on 6th (IJ) and a single was at Tynemouth on 8th before flying off N (DRW). On 8th, a few lucky observers witnessed a group of four, later joined by others to give a maximum of ten, hawking over the lake at Big Waters NWT. All flew off E in the late evening (MM/AA/GB/TB/TF/JFa).

**Sandwich Tern** *Sterna sandvicensis*

The observers at Seaton Sluice recorded maxima of 90 N and 60 S in one hour on 24th and 19th respectively (SSWT). The largest gathering was 120 at Budle Point on 15th (CGK/GPK) and 84, mostly in pairs, were recorded at Beacon Point, Newbiggin on 17th (STH). Peak counts elsewhere were 80 at St Cuthbert's Island (Holy Island) on 24th (IK), 60 at St Mary's Island on 14th (CB) and 32 in the Berwick area on two dates early in the month (MHu). Small groups of up to eight were noted at a further twelve widespread localities between Whitley Bay and the Tweed Estuary.

**Common Tern** *Sterna hirundo*

The species was well recorded this month and over 30 reports were received. Maximum counts from the main nesting colonies were 62 on the raft at the Royal Quays (North Shields) on 12th (ASJ), 26 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 14th (ASJ) and 18 at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN). Elsewhere, double-figure counts of 10-20 came from East Chevington (TRD/JD), Howden (CB) and Holy Island (Guile Point) (IBDa/Ka). One to nine were also seen at Arcot Pond, Branton GP, Corbridge (Dilston), Cramlington, Cresswell (Pond & Snab Point), Cullernose Point, Druridge Pools, Holywell Pond, Leazes Park, Newbiggin, Ovingham (River Tyne), St Mary's Island, Swallow Pond and Tynemouth.

**Roseate Tern** *Sterna dougallii*

The only report was of two flying N at Seaton Sluice on 24th, the first returning birds of the year (SSWT).

**Arctic Tern** *Sterna paradisaea*

The Long Nanny colony held estimated numbers of 300 on 5th (STH/IFo), 1,000 on 14th, and 400 on 28th (TRD/JD). Ten flew N at Whitley Bay on 6th (IJ) and ten were at St. Mary's Island on 14th (CB) with one to four recorded at Berwick (Spittal Cliffs) and Low Newton.

**Kittiwake** *Rissa tridactyla*

No large-scale movements were noted at Seaton Sluice with maximum hourly counts of only 85-150 N on three dates (SSWT) and at Snab Point 120 were counted moving N on 26th (TRD/JD). At Cullernose Point, around 400 breeding pairs were present on 29th (TRD/JD). Elsewhere, 10-40 were recorded at Druridge, East Chevington, Howdon, the River Tweed Estuary and St Mary's Island.

**Bonaparte's Gull** *Chroicocephalus philadelphia*

This extremely rare visitor, a 1st-summer bird, was first seen on Castle Island on 24th (*Birdguides*) and it remained faithful to the Island and the Wansbeck Estuary, being seen by numerous observers, daily to the month end (and into June) (TB/TF/JFa/HP *et al.*).



The popular and long-staying Bonaparte's Gull on the Wansbeck by Chris Hind on 31st May



**Black-headed Gull** *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

Surprisingly few reports, comprising 100 at Amble Weir on 5th (JMA), 20 at Grindon Lough (PRM), eight on the nesting platform at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN), six at West Ord (Berwick) and five in the River Tweed Estuary (MHu).

**Little Gull** *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

The light summer influx was concentrated primarily at East Chevington, where a maximum of six immatures were present on 19th (TRD/ASH *et al.*), and at Cresswell (Pond & Snab Point) and Druridge Pools where one to two were noted from 10th-22nd (AA/TB/STH/TRD/PCF), including a single adult at Snab Point on 13th. Three immatures were also at Budle Bay on 14th (CGK/GPK). Inland records comprised an immature at Grindon Lough on 5th (PRM) and an adult at Haughton Strother GP on 21st (MR).

**Common Gull** *Larus canus*

At Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 18th, 130 were present (SR) with nine at Castle Island on 28th (DM) and one to three at three other localities.

**Lesser Black-backed Gull** *Larus fuscus graelsii*

Breeding records comprised three occupied nests on a factory roof on the Blyth Riverside Industrial Estate (STH) and three pairs on a factory roof at Kitty Brewster, Blyth (DM); a long-frequented nesting site at the old Lead Works at Howdon was this year deserted (CB). Up to 23 birds frequented Haughton Strother GP From 21st-25th (MR), 12 were at West Hartford (DM) with up to seven at Grindon Lough (MRS) and in the River Tweed Estuary (MHu). Up to eight were at Castle Island (DM) with one to four at nine widespread localities elsewhere.

**Herring Gull** *Larus argentatus argenteus*

37 pairs were nesting on a factory roof at Kitty Brewster, Blyth (DM) and, at Blyth Riverside Industrial Estate, 34 occupied nests were on a factory roof with four nests also on the North Blyth staithes (STH). A large gathering of 410 was found during a WeBS survey in the Tweed Estuary on 6th (MHu) and smaller counts of 20-80 were at the Black Middens, Berwick (North Shore), Castle Island, Clifford's Fort (North Shields), Cullercoats, North Shields Fish Quay, Percy Main, Tynemouth Boating Lake and Tynemouth Point (JMA/DM); elsewhere up to 20 were at five sites within the Newcastle conurbation (DM) and at Haughton Strother GP(MR).

**\*Yellow-legged Gull** *Larus michahellis*

An adult was present with Herring Gulls in Ashington on 1st (TB).

**Great Black-backed Gull** *Larus marinus*

In the River Tweed Estuary eight were counted in a WeBS survey (MHu) and up to five found inland at Grindon Lough on various dates throughout (PRM). A bird at Holy Island was watched as it caught and killed a Lumpsucker, then swallowed it whole (IK).

**Rock Dove** *Columba livia*

One count of 58 at North Blyth staithes on 28th (STH).

**Stock Dove** *Columba oenas*

The largest count of 24 from Howdon on 16th (CB) with seven at Marden Quarry on 8th and six there on 2nd (KWY), five at Ellington on 1st and Jesmond Dene on 17th (TB/MJCo). Nesting was noted at inland locations in old or derelict buildings with six pairs between Ninebanks and Allendale with two pairs near Grindon Lough and at Haltwhistle Common. One to four were at nine other locations with four at Linden Hall, the highest count there in 13 years (NFO).

**Woodpigeon** *Columba palumbus*

On 5th 80 were at Happy Valley (Wooler) (MJC), 25 at Holywell West Farm during the month (RJP), seven at Jesmond Dene on 17th (MJCo) and one to six visiting a Holywell garden.

**Collared Dove** *Streptopelia decaocto*

Two pairs were at Fawdon (Newcastle) on 7th (CDB).

**Cuckoo** *Cuculus canorus*

Well reported with seven singing males present at Bewick Moor from 17th till month end, six at Tosson Hill & Simonside on 20th (MJC), four chasing each other at Allendale on 8th (ASJ) and three calling at Slaley and Healey on 10th (AJN). Two were at Alnwick Moor, Beanley Wood, Cartington, Debdon (Rothbury), Derwent Reservoir, Carey Burn (Harthope Valley), Edlingham, Grindon Lough, Lordenshaw and Simonside with singles at many of these and a further 28 widely spread localities.

**Barn Owl** *Tyto alba*

Two nesting in a Sycamore at Humshaugh on 1st (TWi) with only two hunting at Holy Island indicating a shortage of voles (IK). Singles were at Blanchland, Bothal, Pond, Branton, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, Humshaugh, Longhorsley and Rothbury.

**Little Owl** *Athene noctua*

Just one nocturnal encounter at 11.30pm on 18th when one flew up off road at Stannington Station (AJN).

**Tawny Owl** *Strix aluco*

Five called at Allen Banks on 11th (SW), three males at Slaley Forest on 17th (PRM), more than two were in dispute at Hexham on 24th (AJR) and two were at Slaley Forest on 7th (DM). Singles were at eleven other locations.

**Long-eared Owl** *Asio otus*

One flew across road at Shield on the Wall Dam on 15th and called in the Ladycross area of Slaley Forest on 17th (PRM).

**Short-eared Owl** *Asio flammeus*

Up to three were present all month at Holy Island (IK *et al.*) with two at Prestwick Carr on 3rd and singles there regularly till 9th (PCF). Singles also at Cresswell Pond on 5th (STH/IFo), Longhorsley Moor on 8th (AB/LB) and Beal on 27th (MJC).

**Nightjar** *Caprimulgus europaeus*

A male and female were at Winnows Hill (Slaley) on 29th (PRM).

**Swift** *Apus apus*

420 flew N at Horndcliffe on 20th (JDL), 50 at Big Waters NWT on 8th with 40 there on 22nd (TB/GB), 35 at Lynemouth on 5th and Ovingham on 26th (TB/DLe) with 30 at Marden Quarry (Whitley Bay) on 28th and Walltown Quarry on 30th (KWY/PRM). One to 20 were at a further 24 further widespread localities including the aberrant bird again at East Chevington on 2nd.

**Hoopoe** *Upupa epops*

One was flushed from roadside verge at Haltwhistle Common on 8th (SW) and one photographed at Harthope Valley on 20th (*per* NNBC).

**Kingfisher** *Alcedo atthis*

On 15th three were at Low Angerton (IRD) and one or more present at Gosforth Park NR during the month (NHSN/KWY). Singles were at Whiteadder Point (Berwick) on 7th (TBr), High Park (Felton) on 28th (IRD) and Wark (North Tyne) on 31st (PRM).

**Wryneck** *Jynx torquilla*

One in dunes between Snook House and Half Moon Slack (Holy Island) on 28th (MK).

**Green Woodpecker** *Picus viridis*

Three called over a wide area at Slaley-Healey on 10th (AJN), two at Stonehaugh on 14th (ASJ) with singles regularly at Gosforth Park NR, Prestwick Carr, Rothbury and Big Waters during the month. Singles were also at Arcot Pond, Alnwick, Beacon Hill (Longhorsley), Crooked Oak (Derwent Gorge), Dinnington, Dipton Wood, Falstone, Letah Wood (Hexham), Nunnykirk and Shiellow Woods

**Great Spotted Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos major*

At Holywell Dene six were counted from four nest sites observed with two regularly in the observer's garden (RJP). Four visited a garden at Tynemouth on 13th (CB) with two at Blanchland, Derwent Reservoir, Jesmond Dene, and Walltown Quarry. Pairs fed young in the nest at Gosforth Park NR on 19th (KWY) and Jesmond Dene on 25th (DHWB) with one feeding young at Preston Cemetery (North Shields) on 30th and present at ten other locations.

**Kestrel** *Falco tinnunculus*

Pairs were observed at Ellington on 1st (TB) and Cocklawburn on 4th (NNBC). Single birds were reported at Bellingham, Bolam Lake, Boulmer, Corbridge, Druridge Lane, Haughton Strother GPs (Humshaugh), Holywell Dene, Linton Pond, Marsden Quarry (Whitley Bay), Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay), Stag Rocks (Bamburgh), Warren Mill and West Hartford

**Merlin** *Falco columbarius*

A sub-adult female was at Black Law (Ross) on 1st (IK) and a single bird was noted at Goswick on 15th (EHa).

**Peregrine** *Falco peregrinus*

All sightings this month involved birds at confidential breeding sites or in potential breeding habitat.

**Red-backed Shrike** *Lanius collurio*

An influx from the middle of the month with one at Woodhorn Flashes on 11th (TB found Stef McElwee), Annstead (Seahouses) on 12th (GB found I Davidson), Vicar's garden (Holy Island) from 13th to 15th (MJC/IK *et al.*), St Mary's Island on 26th (ASJ) and a confidential inland moor on 29th (MJC).

**Magpie** *Pica pica*

Up to five were at Holywell West Farm during the month with up to two in the observer's garden (RJP), four at Jesmond Dene on 22nd (MJCo) and one at Eachwick on 1st (CDB).

**Jay** *Garrulus glandarius*

Six the peak count at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN), four feeding on the ground at Stonehaugh on 14th (ASJ), two visiting an Eachwick garden regularly (CDB) and at Holywell Dene seen carrying nest material on 4th but no nest was found (RJP). Singles were at ten other locations.





A Red-backed Shrike at Holy Island  
by Mike Carr on 13th May

**Jackdaw** *Corvus monedula*

18 at Wylam on 7th with three pairs at Hareshaw Linn (Bellingham) on 2nd (CDB), five at Jesmond Dene on 22nd (MJCo), four at Holywell Dene on three dates (RJP), three at Eachwick on 1st and two visiting an Old Hartley garden.

**Rook** *Corvus frugilegus*

High counts of 50 at Derwent Reservoir on 2nd, Beadnell on 5th, 25 at Hulne Park on the same date (JMA) and Holywell Dene during the month (RJP) with two at Eachwick on 1st.

**Carrion Crow** *Corvus corone*

On 29th 40 were at North Shields Fish Quay Car Park, 29 at Clifford's Fort (North Shields) on 30th (JMA), 22 at Kitty Brewster (Blyth) on 22nd (DM) and three at Jesmond Dene. Nesting was confirmed from Cowpen (Blyth), St Nicholas Cathedral (Newcastle), Holy Island and Holywell Dene.

**Hooded Crow** *Corvus corone cornix*

One was found by Alan Hall at Holy Island on 1st (MJC *et al.*) and in a field north of Cresswell Pond on 5th (ADMc).

**Raven** *Corvus corax*

Three were at Shillmoor (Upper Coquetdale) on 10th, two at Ingram on 6th (ASJ), Harthope Valley on 8th (TF/JFa) and Cheviot summit on 9th (AB/LB). One flew over the observer's garden at Eachwick on 1st and returned three times during the day (CDB) with one also at Bellingham on 14th.

Eachwick Ravens  
by Chris Barlow  
1st May

**Goldcrest** *Regulus regulus*

A high count of 33 singing birds from a BBS at Kylloe Woods on 9th (TBr), six at Holy Island on 1st (MJC/ADM), three at Prestwick Carr on 3rd (PCF) and Valley Park Cramlington on 9th (DM). One to two generally singing were at 16 other locations.



**Blue Tit** *Cyanistes caeruleus*

18 at New Mills Wood (near Berwick) on 7th (TBr), up to five at Holywell Dene during the month (RJP), five at Eachwick on 1st, three at Jesmond Dene and two at Blanchland. Signs of poor breeding from an Old Hartley Garden with only one of three boxes producing young, seven chicks (RJP).

**Great Tit** *Parus major*

Up to seven at Holywell Dene and up to five in an Old Hartley garden (RJP) with five at Jesmond Dene on 11th (MJCo), four at Eachwick on 1st, two at Blanchland on 2nd. Successful breeding at Kenton (Newcastle) with pair fledging young from nest box on 29th (MRS).

**Coal Tit** *Periparus ater*

Low counts of one to two at Blanchland, Eachwick, Holywell Dene and Jesmond Dene.

**Willow Tit** *Poecile montanus*

One to two visited an Old Hartley garden from Holywell Dene regularly till 18th but not thereafter (RJP). Two at Longhorsley Moor on 1st, nesting at Prestwick Carr on 13th and 14th (TRD/PCF) with singles at Beanley gravel pits on 20th and Lynemouth Dene on 24th (MJC).

**Marsh Tit** *Poecile palustris*

Two at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 5th (BWG), Linden Hall on 7th and Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) on 8th (NFO/TB) with one carrying food at Morralee Wood (Allen Banks) on 15th (STH).

**Skylark** *Alauda arvensis*

On 11th an AONB survey at Goswick Farm found 38 indicating a density of 35 per sq km (Tbr). 22 (eight singing) were at Simonside on 10th, 21 (five singing) and 15 all singing at Sweethope on 29th (ASJ) with ten at Carey Burn (Harthope Valley) on 5th (MJC). One to six were at four other locations.

**Sand Martin** *Riparia riparia*

At Horncliffe 525 flew north on 4th and 475 on 13th (JDL) and 150 fed over water with a flock of hirundines at West Ord (Berwick) on 7th (BWG). Colony counts of 120 aon at Haughton Strother on 8th (MR), 50 at Barrowburn on 10th (ASJ), 20 pairs at Wark on 14th (PRM), more than 30 at Bulby Wood Car Park (Breamish Valley) on 10th (LJM) and 20+ at High Park (Felton) on 28th (DM/IRD). Two to 20 were at ten other locations.

**Swallow** *Hirundo rustica*

150 fed over water with a flock of hirundines at West Ord (Berwick) on 7th (BWG), 40+ at Arcot Pond on 1st and Derwent Reservoir on 30th (LJM/IFo) with 10+ at Arcot Hall, Walltown Quarry and Whitley Bay. At Stonehaugh two pairs were nesting in a natural cave site only the 2nd county occurrence (ASJ) and a male found dead at Holy Island had been ringed from a nest 200 yards away in June 2011, thus five return flights to South Africa of ca.100,000 miles (IK). One to eight were at nine other locations.

**House Martin** *Delichon urbica*

At West Ord (Berwick) on 7th 200 fed in a flock of hirundines (BWG), 40+ at Whiteadder Water (Berwick) on 26th (TBr), 30 at Derwent Reservoir on 30th (IFo) and 22 at Ingram on 6th (ASJ). Nesting was confirmed from numerous locations in Alnwick, Blanchland, Cramlington and Leaplish (Kielder) with one to 15 at ten other locations.

**Long-tailed Tit** *Aegithalos caudatus*

A large gathering of 29 was noted at Waren Mill on 14th (CGK) and a pair escorted six fledged young at Lynemouth Dene on 24th (NJC). Elsewhere reports were of one to four from a further eight localities.

A Long-tailed Tit  
Ellington  
24th May  
Mike Carr

**Wood Warbler** *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

In breeding areas four (three singing) were noted at Tasset Burn (Sidwood) on 14th (ASJ), two at Derwent Gorge on 12th and 24th and singles at Allen Banks and Bellingham.



**Chiffchaff** *Phylloscopus collybita*

Some high coastal counts were made, with 20 at Holy Island on 1st (MJC/ADM) and 15 at New Mills Wood (Berwick) on 7th (TBr). A total of 16 singing and one calling were noted along the coastal route from Newcastle-Bamburgh on 8th (AD). Up to ten were noted at Gosforth Park NR during the month and eight were at Holy Island on 7th, 13th and 19th and in Jesmond Dene on 22nd. One to six were noted at a further 27 localities.

**Willow Warbler** *Phylloscopus trochilus*

A considerable 'fall' was witnessed at Holy Island, with 123 counted on 1st (MJC/ADM) and 24 on 8th. A 2km square young plantation at Wingates supported 53 singing males by 20th (ASJ), while elsewhere in breeding areas 22 were at Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) and 11-13 at College Valley, Happy Valley, New Mills Wood (Berwick) and Prestwick Carr. Counts of ten came from Bellingham, Dipton Wood and Gosforth Park NR, while eight were noted at Carey Burn and Rising Sun CP with one to seven at a further 17 localities.



A Willow Warbler at Bamburgh  
Mike Carr on 10th May

**Blackcap** *Sylvia atricapilla*

Holy Island held 20 on 1st (MJC/ADM), while 14 were at New Mills Wood (Berwick) on 7th (TBr). Counts of singing males included nine at Happy Valley (Wooler) on 5th, eight+ at Gosforth Park on 28th, seven at Branton GP on 10th and at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 14th and six at Rising Sun CP (Wallsend). Seven were noted at Marden Quarry on 8th and six at Horsley Wood on 5th. One to four were reported from a further 33 widespread localities.

**Garden Warbler** *Sylvia borin*

Five singing males were at Whittingham on 20th (MJC) and four was the peak count from Gosforth Park NR, with four also noted at Wingates. Counts of three came from Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) and Harthope Valley, while two were reported from Bakethin, Branton GP, Cartington, Derwent Reservoir, Fontburn Reservoir, Holystone, Longhorsley Moor (including a bird with nest material), Nunnykirk and Walltown Quarry. Singles were at a further 26 localities.

**Lesser Whitethroat** *Sylvia curruca*

Six were noted between Longhirst-West Chevington on 4th (ADM). Four were at Holy Island on 13th (IK) with two there on 7th-8th and singles on 1st, 14th, 22nd and 27th. Two were singing in the Brockwell-Westwood Grange area (Cramlington) on 2nd while singles were also reported from Arcot Pond, Bamburgh, Blyth Estuary, Cullernose Point, Dinnington, East Chevington, Longhorsley, Linton Ponds, Morpeth (County Hall), Ponteland, Rising Sun CP, Stocksfield, Tynemouth, West Hartford and Whitelea Chase (Cramlington).

**Whitethroat** *Sylvia communis*

A 'fall' on 8th produced 21 at Holy Island (ADM). In breeding territory, 14 were at Prestwick Carr on 14th, while counts of singing males included 16 at Wingates, 12 at Backworth, nine in Morpeth, eight at Berwick Moor and seven at Cartington and Cramlington (Brockwell scrub); five pairs were also noted at St Mary's Island. One to five were reported from a further 28 widespread localities.

**Subalpine Warbler** *Sylvia cantillans*

A 2nd calendar year male found and photographed by visiting birders at Chare Ends (Holy Island) on 14th remained in the area until 16th. It was identified as the western race *cantillans* on call. (MJC/IK *et al.*)



The Holy Island Subalpine Warbler by Mike Carr on 14th May

**Grasshopper Warbler** *Locustella naevia*

The regular study in the Cramlington area produced a total of at least 28 territories by month end, including 13 in the Arcot Pond area and eight at West Hartford (STH *et al.*). Eight were reported from Prestwick Carr on 7th and three at East Chevington on 2nd. Counts of two came from Backworth, Bamburgh, Brier Dene Farm, Druridge Pools and Gosforth Park NR, the latter including a bird ringed with a brood patch. Singles were reported from a further 22 localities.



A Gropper in full voice at Bamburgh by Mike Carr on 10th May



**Icterine Warbler** *Hippolais icterina*

A showy individual was at Druridge Pools on 27th (Dave Elliot *per* TRD/JD).



The Druridge Pool Icterine Warbler by Mike Carr on 27th May

**Sedge Warbler** *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

In the Berwick area, 26-27 singing males were noted from New Mills-Whiteadder Point (2.5km) on 6th-7th (TBr/BWG). A large count of 15 was made at Prestwick Carr on 7th (PCF), when 12 were also holding territory at Gosforth Park NR and six of seven birds were singing at Holy Island Lough. Six to seven were noted at Bamburgh dunes on 7th-8th and six were singing at St Mary's Wetland on 1st. Further counts of singing males included five at Branton GP, four in moorland rushes at Stonehaugh and three at Haughton Strother GP (Humshaugh) and at Whittle Dene Reservoirs. One to two were reported from a further 13 localities.



A Sedge Warbler at Bamburgh  
10th May by  
Mike Carr

**Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

The peak count from Gosforth Park NR was eight (NHSN), while five singing males were at Holy Island Lough on 14th (MJC/ADM). Four at Cresswell Pond on 28th included three singing males and up to three were singing at Bates Minewater Treatment Works. Singles were also noted in song at Caistron, East Chevington and St Mary's Wetland.



**Nuthatch** *Sitta europaea*

A pair were feeding young at Jesmond Dene from 24th-26th (DHWB). Two were reported from Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Harthope Valley and Hulne Park, with singles noted at Blanchland, Denwick, East Ord, Leazes Park, Letah Wood (Hexham), Newbrough and Wark (North Tyne).

**Treecreeper** *Certhia familiaris*

A pair was feeding young at Lordenshaw on 20th (ASJ). One to two were also noted at Allen Banks, Big Waters, Dilston, Gosforth Park NR, Harthope Valley, Holywell Dene, Jesmond Dene and Widehope.

**Wren** *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Three to five were noted at Holywell Dene and Jesmond Dene.

**Starling** *Sturnus vulgaris*

The largest reported gatherings were of 60 at Whitley Bay links on 4th and 50 at Shiremoor on 30th (JMA). Elsewhere, 20-30 were noted at Big Waters, Cullercoats and Tynemouth and family parties were at Southfield Green (Cramlington) from 14th.

A juvenile Starling on by Holy island  
Mike Carr, 13th May

**Dipper** *Cinclus cinclus*

Breeding was confirmed at Holywell Dene, where there were two pairs (RJP), Ingram, Langleeford Farm (Harthope Valley), Rothbury (two juveniles) and Scotch Gill Woods (two juveniles). Three were noted on the Carey Burn (Harthope Valley); a pair was at Dilston Mill and singles at Canongate Bridge (River Aln), Hulne Park, New Mills (Berwick), Sills Burn (Redesdale) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.



Two popular birds of the our streams, left: a Dipper and right: a Common Sandpiper. Mike Potts, Ingram, 10th May



**Ring Ouzel** *Turdus torquatus*

In breeding areas up to nine were noted in the Hawsen Burn area (Harthope Valley-NNBC) and a single male was singing at Sipton Burn (Allendale) on 7th-8th. A migrant was noted at Low Newton on 2nd.

**Blackbird** *Turdus merula*

Up to six were noted at Holywell Dene and at Jesmond Dene during the month. Three singing males were at Blanchland on 2nd and three at Eachwick on 1st. A pair with a nest containing two large juveniles was at Happy Valley on 5th and a female was incubating eggs in a nest, situated on an upturned broom head, in an outhouse at Prudhoe on 26th.

**Fieldfare** *Turdus pilaris*

Eight were on Holy Island (MJC/ADM) and a single at Ellington on 1st (TB) and a late migrant was on Holy Island on 14th (IK).

**Song Thrush** *Turdus philomelos*

11 singing males were noted at Ingram on 6th (ASJ) and nine at Whiteadder Point (Berwick) on 7th (TBr). Four singing males and three recently fledged juveniles were at Carey Burn on 5th, and four were also singing at Jesmond Dene and at Rising Sun CP. One to three were reported from a further ten localities.

**Redwing** *Turdus iliacus*

There were two at Holy Island on 1st (MJC/ADM).

**Mistle Thrush** *Turdus viscivorus*

A family party of five (four juvs.) was at Langleeford on 9th (AB/LB) and a pair were feeding young at Morpeth on 12th. Three were at Healey, Jesmond Dene and Longhoughton, two at Prestwick Carr and singles at Derwent Reservoir, Holywell Dene and Hulne Park.

**Spotted Flycatcher** *Muscicapa striata*

There was an influx during the first week of the month, with the first reports from Branton GP on 5th (IBDa/KDa) and two at Backwoodburn (Harthope Valley) on 6th (ADM). Numbers on Holy Island peaked at 23 on 8th (ADM) with a further light fall producing six to eight here from 26th-28th, by which time ten + were noted in the Harthope Valley on 29th. Counts of four came from Bamburgh and Juniper on 8th and Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) and Lordenshaw on 20th. One to three were reported from a further 30 localities.



A Spotted Flycatcher on passage on Holy Island  
27th May by Mike Carr

**Robin** *Erithacus rubecula*

A light influx at Holy Island produced 14 'Continental birds' on 1st (MJC/ADM). Breeding was confirmed at Fulbeck (Morpeth) where four eggs were laid in an open-fronted nest box, at Morralee Wood (Allen Banks) where an adult was carrying food and fledged juveniles were noted at Haughton Strother (Humshaugh) and at Wylam. One to three birds were reported from Eachwick, Holywell Dene and Jesmond Dene.



**Bluethroat** *Luscinia svecica*

On Holy Island, a skulking male/1st summer male was on the Straight Lonnen from 13th-16th and a more showy female was at Chare Ends from 14th-15th (PM/ADM/MJS/IK *et al.*).

A remarkable record involved a male of the red-spotted *svecica* race found in a garden at Killingworth on 13th. It remained until 21st and was occasionally heard in sub-song (J.Davidson). This record has not gone out on social media, but 'permission' was given by the houseowner to report to NTBC (GB).



Two Bluethroats from Holy Island

top: a first winter by Jonathan Farooqi

on 16th May and right:

a female on 13th May by Mike Carr

**Pied Flycatcher** *Ficedula hypoleuca*

Passage birds were noted on Holy Island with a peak of five on 13th (IK); two were noted here on 14th and singles on 7th and 10th. In breeding areas four singing males were at Plankey Mill (Allenbanks) on 8th (ASJ) and also at Nunnykirk on 18th (TRD/JD) and three at Letah Wood (Hexham) on 8th. One to two were reported from Bellingham, Crooked Oak, Dipton Wood, Fontburn Reservoir, Harthope, Holystone and Morrale Wood.

**Black Redstart** *Phoenicurus ochruros*

Singles were noted at Holy Island on 8th (ADM) and Sandy Bay (Newbiggin) on 14th (GB).

**Redstart** *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

A total of 12 singing males were noted over 6km of roadside trees from Beacon Hill-Wingates on 20th (ASJ). Six were noted at Holystone on 22nd, four singing males were at Callaly and at Cartington and up to four were noted regularly at Derwent Reservoir. Counts of three singing males were made at Haughton Strother (Humshaugh), Harthope Valley and Thrunton Woods with three also noted at Nunnykirk and Plankey Mill. A pair was prospecting a nest box at Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) on 8th, a pair was feeding young at Lordenshaw on 20th and a pair was using a nest box at Haughton Strother. One to two were reported from a further 25 localities.



**Whinchat** *Saxicola rubetra*

A total of 17 (one female) was noted in the Breamish Valley on 6th (ASJ) and 15 singing males were in Upper Coquetdale on 10th (ASJ). Elsewhere in breeding areas eight+ were found in the Harthope Valley on 8th, four singing males were at Tosson Hill on 20th and at Cartington on 22nd and three on Berwick Moor on 17th. Four were on Holy Island on 8th, with three there on 14th and a single on 27th and a pair were noted at Low Newton on 2nd. Singles were also at Arcot Pond on 8th, Boulmer on 17th, East Chevington on 1st, Tynemouth on 8th and 26th and at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 3rd.



A Whinchat in a stronghold for the species, the Harthope Valley. Jonathan Farooqi on 8th May

**Stonechat** *Saxicola rubicola*

A large number of reports this month included an encouraging return to inland breeding areas. There were 14 (seven pairs) at Berwick Moor on 17th (MJC); three pairs were noted at Bamburgh-Budle Bay during the month and pairs with three fledged juveniles were at Druridge Pools from 22nd and at Winnowshill on 20th. Further confirmation of breeding came from Bamburgh Dunes, near Grindon Lough, Low Newton, Old Hartley, Simonside, West Hartford and Winter's Gibbet (Harwood Forest). Up to four were noted at Cocklawburn and Holy Island; three singing males were at Cartington and one to two at Cresswell Pond, East Chevington, North Blyth and Sipton Burn (Allendale).



A Stonechat on gorse at Bamburgh on 10th May by Mike Carr

**Wheatear** *Oenanthe oenanthe*

There were 13 on Holy Island on 1st (MJC/ADM), declining to six on 5th and 7th-8th. In breeding areas 12 (eight males) were in Upper Coquetdale on 10th, and six+ in the College Valley on 6th included nest building. Five passage birds were at Budle Bay on 2nd and one to two were in a further nine coastal areas until 19th. Elsewhere one to three were noted at Brenkley, Carey Burn (Harthope Valley), Edlingham, Grindon Lough, Lanehead (Tasset) and Swinehope Moor.

**Duncock** *Prunella modularis*

Poorly reported with three at Jesmond Dene, Gosforth Garden Village and two at Holywell Dene, Marden Estate and Eachwick during the month.

**House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus*

Reported from garden feeders with up to six at Tynemouth and 13 at Marden Estate, where some were feeding young in nests(CB/ASJ).

**Tree Sparrow** *Passer montanus*

Around ten were seen at Low Cocklaw (Berwick) on 8th and at Cresswell Pond on 26th. A pair using a nest box at Morpeth, had five young ready to fledge on 23rd(MJC). One to five were noted at a further 12 sites.

A Tree Sparrow at

Cresswell

Mike Carr

24th May

**Yellow Wagtail** *Motacilla flava*

A good count of 16 was made at Whittle Dene on 18th(SR). Two to four were noted at Hoppen Kiln Flash on many dates during the month(GPK), with four also at Newton Flash on 2nd(TD). Three were at Haughton Strother on 5th and Widdrington on 8th and one to two were watched at 13 further widespread sites. A Blue-headed Wagtail was seen at Whittle Dene on 6th(EC/JSB).

A Yellow Wagtail  
Cresswell  
Tim Dean  
19th May





**Grey Wagtail** *Motacilla cinerea*

A minimum of 11 birds (7 males) were on territory in Upper Couquetdale on (ASJ). Three pairs noted on 2nd at Hareshaw Linn(Bellingham) (CDB). An adult with two juveniles seen at Rothbury on 20th(KWY) and three also at Harthope and Jesmond Dene in the month. One to two noted at a further 14 locations.

**Pied Wagtail** *Motacilla alba*

Ten at Whiteadder Point (Berwick) on 7th was the peak count( TBr). Breeding pairs were at Gosforth Park, Exhibition Park (Newcastle) Whitley Bay and Upper Coquetdale, described as common at the latter site (DM/ASJ). A single observed at Howdon on 12th was noted as at an unusual site(CB).

**White Wagtail** *Motacilla alba alba*

Three were seen at Haughton Strother on 3rd (MR). Singles were at Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, Holy Island, Grindon and Low Newton during the month.

**Tree Pipit** *Anthus trivialis*

Five were in display flights in an area of young trees at Wingates on 20th (ASJ). A feeding group of four were noted at Harthope on 3rd (AA). Three seen at Beacon Hill on 8th, with two there on 10th and 20th (TB/EC/JSB/ASJ). Three also at Holystone on 22nd (IBDa/KDa). Two seen at several other typical woodland areas such as Dipton, Simonside, Nunnykirk, Sweethope and Thrunton during May, with singles at a further eight sites from Bamburgh to Catcleugh.

**Meadow Pipit** *Anthus pratensis*

A total of 80 birds noted on Holy Island on 1st (MJC/ADM). Inland, 45 were along the Carey Burn (Harthope) on 5th (MJC). A survey at Goswick on 11th revealed 22 (20 per square km.) (TBr). Noted as common in display at Yardhope/Holystone area, with many feeding young on 10th and at Sweethope/Buteland Fell (Redesdale) on 29th (ASJ). Six were at Cocklawburn on 4th (BWG).



A Meadow Pipit  
the Carey Burn  
5th May  
Mike Carr

**Rock Pipit** *Anthus petrosus*

Two were displaying/song-flighting at Tynemouth and one at Rockcliffe (Cullercoats) during the month, the latter seen feeding in sea-front gardens (ASJ). One was seen at Cullernose Point on 29th (TRD/JD).

**Chaffinch** *Fringilla coelebs*

26 on feeders at Nunnykirk on 7th was the peak count during the month (DM/ALT/HD). Elsewhere, one to seven were at seven further sites.

A cock Chaffinch  
the Carey Burn  
5th May  
by Mike Carr

**Common Rosefinch** *Montifringilla nivalis*

One found earlier was watched at Druridge Pools on 27th (TRD/JD).

**Bullfinch** *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Three pairs were at East Holywell on 18th and at Bakethin on 20th (MNC/ASJ). Two to three pairs were in Holywell Dene on several dates (ASJ/RJP). Three were seen at Arcot Lane and Valley Park (Cramlington) on 8th and 22nd respectively (DM). A male accompanying a juvenile at Castle Island on 27th (TRD/JD). One or two at eight further sites.

**Greenfinch** *Carduelis chloris*

Three were seen at Alnwick Garden and Swallow Pond during the month and a pair on feeders at Marden Estate (Cullercoats) on several dates. One or two were at five other sites.

**Linnet** *Carduelis cannabina*

69 were counted on Holy Island on 1st (MJC/ADM). 31 were watched feeding on Dandelions at High Mickley on 15th (DLe). Six-seven pairs at St Mary's in gorse and hedgerows throughout the month (ASJ/JMA). 13 birds at Goswick Farm on 11th (TBr). One to seven were at a further 12 sites, including a pair nesting in a Marden Estate garden for the first time.

**Twite** *Carduelis flavirostris*

The sole sighting was of one on Holy Island on 8th (SR/AH).

**Lesser Redpoll** *Carduelis caberet*

12+ were at Detchant on 7th and 12 at Corbridge the following day (GPK/RB/MB). One to four were at 19 other locations during May.

**Crossbill** *Loxia curvirostra*

17 seen at Craggside on 21st, with 16 at Thrunton on 31st (MJC). A group of 15, including juveniles and a singing male were at Stonehaugh on 14th (ASJ). 12 were at Dipton Wood on 29th (DLe). On 4th ten were seen at Edlingham, with six at Callaly the previous day (MJC). Five flew over Longhirst on 13th (TFa/JFa) and two pairs were together at Winnows Hill (Slaley) and singles were singing at Debden and Widehope on 29th (JSB/EC/TD/JD).

**Goldfinch** *Carduelis carduelis*

Nine or ten nesting pairs were in trees/hedgerows along waggonways from Whitley Bay-Holywell during the month and 18 were at Alnwick Garden on 2nd (ASJ/JMA). Commonly singing in Cullercoats/Whitley Bay gardens during May (ASJ). Eight were noted at Grindon on 19th with smaller numbers on several dates (PRM). One to six seen at 12 other widespread sites during the month.

**Siskin** *Carduelis spinus*

Eight watched at Nunnykirk on 7th (DM). Six passing through Holy island on 27th (MJC/ADM). Six also on garden feeders at Linden Hall and Eachwick (NFO/CDB). Appeared to be common in typical upland forested areas such as Harwood, Redesdale, Wark Forest and Kielder during the month (ASJ). One to four were at 19 further sites throughout the month from Holy Island to Gosforth, Alnwick and Morpeth garden feeders.

**Yellowhammer** *Emberiza citronella*

An encouraging number of singing males was noted during the month, with 31 counted on a 22km cycle ride in the Blackheddon/Ingoe/Matfen area on 27th. Further north, 17 were at Glanton/Whittingham on 6th and 16 from Bellasis Bridge to Tranwell on 3rd (ASJ). 15 were singing at Flodden Hill (Ford) on 8th (TBr). 11 on hedgerows south of Whittle Dene on 10th, eight to ten were in the Breamish Valley on 6th and six at Holywell on 4th (ASJ). Two to three were at Whittle Dene and Derwent Reservoirs, Bolam, Corbridge, Linton, Wark and Big Waters, Dipton and Beacon Lane (Cramlington) during the month. A single at Foxton on 5th.





**Reed Bunting** *Emeriza schoeniclus*

The St. Mary's - Hartley area held 13 singing males and up to four females seen during the month, with 12 noted on territory along the river in Upper Coquetdale on 10th (ASJ). Gosforth Park held eight+ in May and four were at Arcot Pond on 14th (NHSN/DM). One or two were at 19 widespread sites, including singing males at Grindon (two) and Broomlee and one in an Old Hartley garden on 25th(DM/PRM/RJP *et al.*).

**ESCAPES, HYBRIDS AND BIRDS OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN****Escapes****Black Swan** *Cygnus atratus*

One was found with 80 Mute Swans on the Tweed Estuary at Calot Shad on 22nd (MHu).

**Muscovy Duck** *Cairina moschata*

A drake was noted at Bothal Pond on 10th and 21st (TB/TD) with the same individual also noted at QE II CP in Ashington on 19th (TB).

**LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS**

A.Allen, J.M.Almond, E.Baonza, C.D.Barlow, D.G. & R.H.Bell, R.J. & M.Bentley (RB/MB), D.H.W.Blair, T.Blake, J.S.Booth, G.Bowman, C.Bradshaw, T.Brewis (TBr), A. & L.Brunst, M.J.Carr, S.Carter (SCa), M.N.Coates, M.J.Cook (MJCo), E.Crabtree, T.Daley, I.B. & K.Davison (IBDa / KDa), T.R. & J.Dean, I.R.Douglas, J.Farooqi (JFa), T.Farooqi, P.C.Fletcher, I.Forsyth (IFo), A.Hall, C.D.Hampton, E.Harrison (EHa), R.M. & P.M.Harrison, (RMHa/PMHa), M.Hepple (Mhp), S.T.Holliday, M.Hutcheson (MHu), A.S.Jack, I.J.Johnson, M.G.Kerby (MK), I.Kerr, C.G.Knox, G.P.Knox, D.Leat (DLe), J.Littlewood, J.D.Lough, J.P.Lumby, S.March (SMa), P.R.Massey, L.J.Mcdougall D.McKeown, A.D.McLevy, G.Milward (GMi), T.Mitcham, A.D.Mould, A.Newsome, A.J.Newson, N.F.Osborne, R.J.Pannell, M.Peters, M.Potts, A.J.Richards, M.Richardson, S.Rippon, M.R.Smith, A.L.Todd, D.R.Watson, S.Westerberg, T.Wiffen (TWi), G.Wolverson (GWo), C.Wright, K.W.York.

Berwick Wildlife Group, Natural History Society of Northumbria, North Northumberland Bird Club, Seaton Sluice Watch Tower.

**Apologies for any accidental omissions**

A Jay at Eachwick by Chris Barlow

## BULLETIN COMPILATION AND PRODUCTION

This bulletin was compiled by Graeme Bowman (Mute Swan to Ruddy Duck), Steve Laing (Red Grouse to Black-necked Grebe), Trevor Blake (Honey-buzzard to Crane), Tom Brewis (Avocet to Godwit), Clive Hampton (Turnstone to Skua), Eddie Crabtree (Puffin to Great Black-backed Gull), Tim Dean (Escapes, Hybrids and Unknown Origin, List of Contributors, Highlights), Peter Fletcher (Feral Pigeon to Red-rumped Swallow), Mike Richardson (Cetti's Warbler to Pied Flycatcher), Alan Jack (Dunnock to Corn Bunting), Kathy Evans (WeBS Coastal Counts) and Steve Holliday (WeBS Inland Counts).

Data Manager is Tom Brewis

Thanks to David Sanders of NNBC for providing data.

Proof reading was by Mike Smith. Mail distribution by Paul Stewart.

Edited by Steve Barrett [NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com](mailto:NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com)

## RECORD SUBMISSION

Please email records for the month to [ntbc.records@googlemail.com](mailto:ntbc.records@googlemail.com)

Please email for a copy of the standard spreadsheet and other details.

Location names and grid references: Please use of standard location names and include grid references as this greatly increases the value of records in subsequent analyses. A 1km square grid reference is the ideal e.g. NY8067 for Grindon Lough, but 2km square references (tetrads) are also acceptable e.g. NY86D in this case. A list of localities and their tetrad grid references (tetrad/Locality List) can be downloaded from the 'Resources & Downloads' section of the Club website at <http://www.ntbc.org.uk> – the use of these names, wherever possible, would be highly appreciated.

Could club members ensure they to submit records direct to NTBC rather than just Birdtrack. There may be an assumption by some members this happens automatically. We do not want to miss records.

## PHOTOGRAPHS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Please keep submitting your articles, photographs, sketches and illustrations for the bulletin. Thanks again to those who have supplied the excellent photographs. Please send to Steve Barrett at [NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com](mailto:NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com)

It is preferable if you re-size your photos before sending and a suggested size is 640 x 480 pixels. Please ensure you include the following information with your submissions: name, species, date taken, locality.

Photographs will not be used elsewhere without the photographer's permission.

## MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Annual membership costs £10 for a junior, £30 for an individual, and £32 for a family.

For membership enquiries please contact [ntbc@jobentley.plus.com](mailto:ntbc@jobentley.plus.com)

Membership subscriptions were due at the beginning of October. If you internet bank you can pay online: please include your name in the ref. It is helpful if you email me to let me know when you've made the transfer [ntbc@jobentley.plus.com](mailto:ntbc@jobentley.plus.com)

If you decide to set up a standing order please date the first payment at least a fortnight from your posting date to allow time to process with the bank. You can also set up your standing order directly with your bank if you wish; just let me know.

Finally, if you know anyone who might like to join NTBC please pass on the club information - new members are always welcome.

**Jo Bentley - Hon Treasurer**

## NTBC WEB SITE

The Club website is an excellent resource for all interested in birds in the north-east. There are numerous interesting sections, including a photograph gallery, site information and trip reports together with extensive reference information for birding in our area. Please submit any new content for the website to the main club email address.

## NTBC SIGHTINGS PAGE

The Sightings Page contains current reports by members. Access is from the NTBC website and an email notification is available for new postings. Members need to submit a request to be added to the website, specifying the email address they wish to post from before they can submit sightings to [ntbcorg@gmail.com](mailto:ntbcorg@gmail.com)

## INLAND WEBS COUNTERS

Inland WeBS counters needed in the future! Although there are no inland sites available at the present time it is envisaged that opportunities for taking over a site will become available during the next year or two. If you are interested in lodging your name, home location and contact details in case a site becomes open please contact Steve Holliday email [steveholiday@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:steveholiday@hotmail.co.uk)

Steve Holliday

## CHAIRMAN EMAIL ADDRESS

Martin Davison has been missing some emails. Could you please note the correct address;

[martindavison3@gmail.com](mailto:martindavison3@gmail.com)



**PELAGIC TRIPS 2016****Northern Experience Programme 2016 (in association with the Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club)**

**4-hour evening pelagics** departing Royal Quays Marina, 18:00 and Mill Dam (South Shields), 18:10. Cost £28.50/person.

Target species; **Storm Petrel, skuas, shearwaters, cetaceans**

Wednesday 29th June

Wednesday 6th July

Monday 11th July

Wednesday 13th July

Wednesday 20th July

Wednesday 27th July

Friday 29th July

**10-hour 'Northumberland Ultimate Pelagic' to the Farne Deeps** departing Royal Quays Marina, 08:00 and Mill Dam (South Shields) 08:10. Cost £65.00/person. Target species; **White-beaked Dolphin, Common Dolphin, Minke Whale, skuas, shearwaters, storm petrels**

Saturday 13th August

Saturday 10th September

Saturday 24th September

**4-hour Whale and Dolphin Cruise** departing Seahouses Harbour at 10:00. Cost £35/adult, £20/child. Target species; **White-beaked Dolphin, Minke Whale, Harbour Porpoise.**

Saturday 27th August

Our pelagic trips from Royal Quays in 2016 will take place on the *JFK2*, a 10m catamaran. This new vessel offers an outstanding vantage point for observation of wildlife. All of our Royal Quays pelagics are limited to a maximum of 12 participants, allowing all on board a good opportunity to see any birds or cetaceans which are found. Some truly outstanding opportunities for photography occur on our pelagic trips as well, with many birds and cetaceans approaching very close to the boat.

Our Whale & Dolphin Cruise from Seahouses will be on *Glad Tidings V*.

Our pelagic trips have proved very successful and they are an excellent way to enjoy our offshore wildlife in the company of other birders who are always willing to help any less experienced participants. More experienced birders may well find that the North Sea is a new frontier for their birding. Pelagic birding is very unpredictable but highlights of our trips have included the 1st British North Sea **Wilson's Petrel** (2002), **Long-tailed Skua** (2002, 2014), **Sabine's Gull** (2005), **Great Shearwater** (2007), **Balearic Shearwater** (2007, 2013), **Pomarine Skua** (2007, 2012, 2014), **Grey Phalarope** (2010, 2012), **Red-necked Phalarope** (2013), excellent views of **Sooty Shearwater** in each of the last fourteen years, **Harbour Porpoise** (2006, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015), **Minke Whale** (2006, 2007, 2008, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015), **Orca** (2013) and several very close encounters with **White-beaked Dolphin** in each year since 2010.

Participants should bring their own food and drink and warm/waterproof clothing.

To reserve a place on any of these trips, please contact Martin Kitching [martin@newtltd.co.uk](mailto:martin@newtltd.co.uk) or (01670) 827465 and send a deposit of £10 per person per trip (cheque payable to 'Northern Experience Wildlife Tours Ltd', non-refundable if you cancel at a later date) to NEWT Ltd, 18 Frances Ville, Scotland Gate, Northumberland, NE62 5ST. The balance of payment is due 2 weeks before sailing.

**Martin Kitching**

COASTAL WEBS COUNTS: NORTHUMBERLAND								JAR		J. Roper / W. Banks		LJM		L. J. McDougall		MLC		M. L. Cadwallender / W. Dickson		
APRIL		2016		TB	T. Brewis			AB	A. Brunt			MGA	M. G. Anderson		TAC	T. A. Cadwallender				
				AC	A. Craggs			SP	S. Parnaby						DMT	D. M. Turner				
				MHu	M. Hutcheson			RP	R. Poyer			KAE	K. A. Evans		PF	P. Fletcher				
Site	TOTAL	Berwick North Shore (including Little Beach)	Tweed Estuary	Whiteadder Water	Tweed; A1 By-Pass to Gainslaw House	Spital - Cocklawburn	Lindisfarne MNR (including Budle Bay)	Budle Bay	Budle Pt - Seahouses	Seahouses - Beadnell	Howick - Boulmer	Boulmer - Alnmouth	Aln Estuary	Cresswell - Newbiggin	Blyth Estuary	St Mary's Island	Tyne North Pier - Fish Quay	East Howdon, (north bank only)	Redheugh - Scotswood Bridge (north bank)	Scotswood - Newburn Bridge (north bank)
Counter		MHu	MHu	TB	TB	MHu	AC	AC	KAE	MLC	JAR	AB	TAC	MGA	LJM	SP	DMT	DMT	PF	PF
Date		6	8	20	21	11	10	10	10	5	11	19	8	9	10	12	28	29	16	16
Red-throated Diver	4		1			1									1	1				
Little Grebe	3												2			1				
Cormorant	147	11	8		30	3	20		6	13	2	3	1		6	22	15	5	2	
Shag	21	4				5	5		3	3						1				
Grey Heron	39	2	12	3	1		7		2	3		5	3						1	
Mute Swan	157		136	4	4		4	2					5					1	3	
Whooper Swan	3				3															
Pink-footed Goose	46						46													
Greylag Goose	156					3	152	150					1							
Canada Goose	20		2										16				2			
Light-bellied Brent Goose	35						35													
Shelduck	478				1		346	125		2	31	16	31		33			4	14	
Wigeon	27							1				14	13							
Gadwall	7														4	3				
Teal	280		4	1	12		138	110					33		26	6			56	4
Mallard	182	2	16	35	27	2	26	10		4	8		38		4	4	2	4	1	9
Shoveler	4						4													
Tufted Duck	5						3						2							
Eider	901	18	2			106	206		280	77	39	34	6	6	91	35	1			
Long-tailed Duck	3	2					1													
Common Scoter	49					34			15											
Goldeneye	16		12										4							
Red-breasted Merganser	28	1	2				5		4	2			3		11					
Goosander	39		14	7	18															
Moorhen	21			2			3			1			12			3				
Coot	9						4						2			3				
Oystercatcher	716	14	4	5		6	317	128	35	73	61	35	38	33	14	54	27			
Ringed Plover	74		2				9			11	8	15	4	8		15	2			
Golden Plover	133						116					5				12				
Grey Plover	60						44			4		9	1	2						
Lapwing	77						11				9		35			22				
Knot	210						198	20		1						11				
Sanderling	199						34		10			7	55	38		55				
Purple Sandpiper	416	2							146	236		2		25		5				
Dunlin	181						163				2	8		1		7				
Snipe	6						4						2							
Black-tailed Godwit	5														5					
Bar-tailed Godwit	46						38					8								
Whimbrel	4											4								
Curlew	721	5	36			24	342	100	10	10	36	4	166		40	45	2	1		
Redshank	1,281	18	233		3		397	240	5		36	26	82	109	191	112			59	10
Common Sandpiper	3			3																
Turnstone	536	40	12			4	29			247	3	20		89	12	72	8			
Black-headed Gull	858	4	36		3	2	388	70	60	59	38		206		54			8		
Common Gull	141		2	1	7		103	15	4								9	15		
Lesser Black-backed Gull	67	2	2		2		13	12							12			1	33	2
Herring Gull	2,172	92	278	31	5	78	485	45	261	389	108		15		192		93	51	84	10
Great Black-backed Gull	81	2	6			2	8	7	9	11	1		3		5		30		4	
Kittiwake	263		38						1	160							53	11		
Sandwich Tern	38	2	2						31			3								
ADDITIONAL SPECIES																				
Little Egret	4						2								2					
Water Rail	1															1				
Fulmar	15		2			3			3	6	1									
Guillemot	22	3				8			5		6									
Razorbill	2	1				1														
Gannet	5	5									60		25							
TOTALS - WILDFOWL	2,680	40	209	52	96	154	1,005	398	310	105	80	72	172	6	176	79	20	14	77	13
- WADERS	4,668	79	287	8	3	34	1,702	488	206	582	155	143	383	305	262	410	39	1	59	10
- GULLS & TERNS	3,620	102	364	32	17	82	997	149	366	619	147	3	224	0	263	0	185	86	121	12



INLAND WEBS COUNTS: NORTHUMBERLAND

Year: 2016

Month: MAY

Version: Interim

	TOTAL	Site										Alyr Holm Reservoir										Arcoot Pond										Big Waters										Bothal Pond										Branton GP										Broomlee Lough										Castron										Castle Island										Druidge Pools										East Chevington										Greenlee Lough										Grindon Lough										Hauxley NR										Hedgeley GP										Holburn Moss										Killingworth Lake										Leazes Park										Linton Pond										Monks' House Pool										Newsham Pond										Shield on the Wall										Swallow Pond										West Stobswold										Widlington Moor										Woodhorn Flashes																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																											
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# Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

<http://www.ntbc.org.uk/>

Bulletin 2016 No 6

MONTHLY SUMMARY JUNE 2016

30th June 2016



## CONTENTS

WeBS inland

WeBS Coastal

BIN – a request for photographs

Hen Harrier day at Saltholme

National Raptor Conference

Inland WeBS counters needed

Paper bulletin - Four replacement pages 120 to 123 are attached for the May Bulletin

## CLASSIFIED LIST HIGHLIGHTS

Great White Egret

Adult still in breeding plumage at Druridge Pools. Also visited Castle Island.

Curlew Sandpiper

Only record so far this year was one at Blyth Estuary on 3rd.

Red-necked Phalarope

Female at Grindon Lough now summering and present all month.

Long-tailed Skua

Adult passed Tynemouth on 18th and immature passed there on 4th.

Bonaparte's Gull

First-summer still at Wansbeck Estuary, now summering and seen all month.

Hobby

Single over Cresswell hide scattered *hirundines* on 13th.

## INDOOR MEETINGS

NTBC indoor meetings are held at Northern Rugby Club, McCracken Park, Great North Road, Newcastle, NE3 2DT starting at 7.00pm and generally finish between 9.00pm-9.30pm. The next meeting is after the summer on Thursday September 8th.

## FIELD TRIPS

The next field trip is an autumn visit to a popular estuary:

25th September - Alnmouth

Please contact Steve Anderson for details [seaswan@btinternet.com](mailto:seaswan@btinternet.com)



A Curlew at Allendale on 9th June by Alan Jack



**CLASSIFIED LIST****Mute Swan** *Cygnus olor*

The peak count was 334 in the Tweed Estuary on 8th, whilst in this area on 12th, 166 were at Tweed Dock (Tweedmouth) and 76 at New Water Haugh (MHu). Other large counts were 56 in the Wansbeck Estuary on 23rd (STH), 53 at Killingworth Lake on 8th (LJM), 25 in the Coquet Estuary on 13th (JMA) and 18 on the River Tyne at Howdon on 2nd (CB). Additional breeding records are detailed below. Nesting birds were also noted at Greenlee Lough, Shield-on-the Wall Dam. Elsewhere up to eight birds were noted at Arcot Pond, Druridge Pools, Elswick Wharf, Leazes Park (Newcastle), Linton Ponds, Monks' House Pool. The brood of seven previously noted at Holy Island all vanished with predation strongly suspected (IK). Additional breeding records are detailed below.

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
East Chevington	3	17 (6,6,1)	6 & 1 on North Pool and 6 on South LJM on 7th
Ladyburn Lake	1	7	JMA on 30th
Willington Gut	1	7	CDH/STH on 19th
Castle Island	1	6	CDH on 23rd
Exhibition Park Newcastle	1	6	DM on 10th
Howdon	1	6	CB on 2nd
Broomlee Lough	1	5	MRS on 7th
Hedgeley GP	1	5	LJM on 14th
Killingworth Lake	1	5	LJM on 8th
Branton GP	1	4	JMA on 6th
Norham	1	3	MHu on 5th

**Greylag Goose** *Anser anser*

Flocks of ten and eight flew S at Ellington on 9th/2nd respectively (TB). A very large flock of 1,100 was at Derwent Reservoir on 22nd, including 100s of juveniles (IFo). On 30th 150 were at Hauxley NR (JMA) and 20+ adults were at Woodhorn Flashes on 11th (GB). Additional breeding records are detailed below.

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Roddam Quarry Pond	4	9 (3x2 & 1x3)	JMA on 6 th
East Chevington North Pool	2	4 (3,1)	LJM on 7 th
Cresswell Pond	1	4	STH on 15 th
Hauxley NR	1	3	JMA on 30 th
Nelly's Moss Lake Craggside	1	3	JMA on 4 th
Rothley	1	2	JMA on 4 th
Woodhorn Flashes	1	1	GB on 11 th

**Greater Canada Goose** *Branta canadensis*

At Ladyburn Lake 57 flew N on 7th (LJM), whilst groups of 30 were noted flying N over Chare Ends (Holy Island) on 4th, NW over Lower Holywell Dene on 5th and N at Hauxley NR on 15th (STH), five flew N at Ellington on 2nd and four flew S at Needles Eye (Berwick) on 8th. A flock of 125-126 was present in the Castle Island/Wansbeck Estuary area on 23rd/27th (STH/CDH), 102 were at Grindon Lough on 7th, 97 at Derwent Reservoir on 30th (IFo) and 22 in the Blyth Estuary on 5th (LJM). 18 were at Leazes Park (Newcastle) on 14th and 15 at Hauxley NR on 30th and two to three were in the Tweed Estuary and at Bothal Pond. Additional breeding records are detailed below.

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Hedgeley GP	5	21	LJM on 14th
Widdrington Moor Lake	4	16	LJM on 7th
Roddam Quarry Pond	2	8	JMA on 6th
Linton Ponds	1	11	MSH on 5th
Castle Island	1	8	STH on 27th
Druridge Pools	1	4	JMA on 30th
Killingworth Lake	1	2	LJM on 8th 1st breeding record here
Cresswell Pond	1	1	STH on 2nd

**Barnacle Goose** *Branta leucopsis*

On 5th 31 flew N at East Chevington beach (TF/JFa). Two were at Holy Island causeway on 4th (ADM).

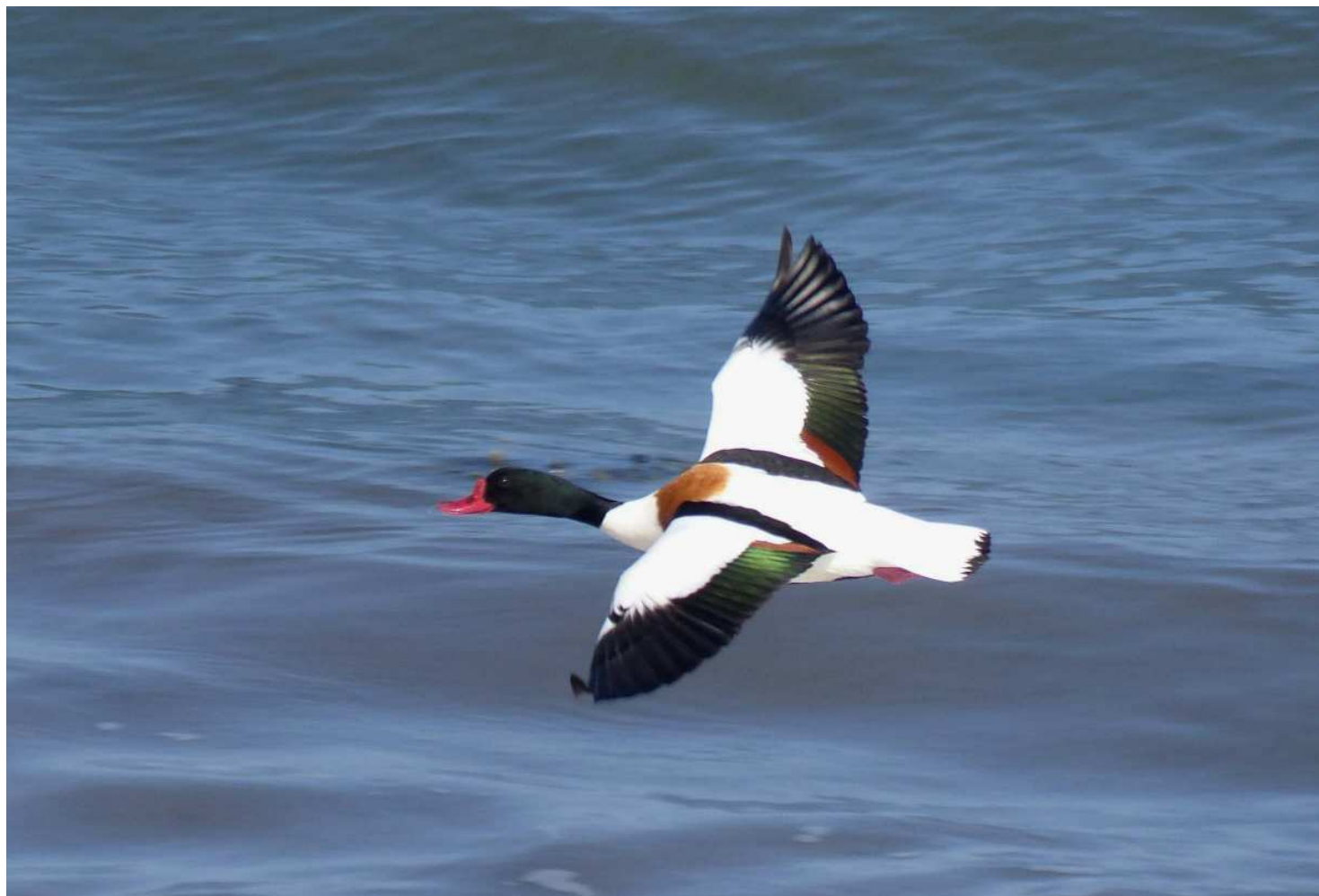
**Brent Goose** *Branta bernicla*

Four, including one with a damaged wing, were at Fenham Flats on 4th (JL).

**Shelduck** *Tadorna tadorna*

On 21st six flew S together at St Mary's Island (MSH) on 21st. Numbers in Budle Bay increased from 81 on 6th to 189 on 26th (MSH/CGK/GPK). On 3rd 18 were at Howdon (CB). Elsewhere eight were at Hoppen Kiln Pond (Lucker), six (three pairs) on the river Tyne from Elswick-Newcastle Business Park, two in the Tweed Estuary and at West Ord and singles at Bothal Pond and Brenkley. Additional breeding records are detailed below.

Locality	No. of broods/crèches	No. of young	Observer/notes
Hauxley NR	3	12 (5,4,3)	JMA on 30th
West Stobswood Pool	2	19	MSH on 14th
Castle Island	2	18 (15,3)	STH on 29th
Blyth Estuary	2	10 (9,1)	LJM
Cresswell Pond	1	19	STH on 15th
East Chevington North Pool	1	10	STH on 15th
Coquet Estuary	1	8	JMA on 13th
Druridge Pools	1	4	STH on 2nd



A Shelduck passing Boulmer on 5th June by Eddie Douglas

#### **Wigeon** *Anas penelope*

20 were at Grindon Lough on 7th (MRS). Eight were at Hoppen Kiln Pond (Lucker) on 18th (GPK). Up to three males and one female were noted at Druridge Pools from 2nd-5th (MSH/STH/TRD/JD). Up to two were seen in the last week of the month in Budle Bay (GPK).

#### **Gadwall** *Anas strepera*

One flew N at Newbiggin on 4th (GB/LAR). The peak count for the month was 37 at Bothal Pond on 21st (TF/JFa) and Cresswell Pond on 28th (MSH). Other double figure counts were 13 at East Chevington on 5th (JL) and ten at Linton Ponds on 4th. One to five were seen at Arcot Pond, Bell's Pond (Cresswell), Castron, Cresswell Pond, Holy Island Lough, Howdon, Linton Ponds and Monks' House Pool. Breeding data are tabulated below.

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Bothal Pond	1	12	TF/JFa on 14th
Castle Island	1	9	STH on 27th
Druridge Pools	1	8	TRD on 5th

#### **Teal** *Anas crecca*

On 9th 12 flew N at Seaton Sluice (SSWT) and 11 at Newbiggin (STH). The peak counts were 25 (22 males) at Druridge Pools on 15th (TRD), 20 at Grindon Lough on 18th (TRD/JD), 18 adults at Derwent Reservoir on 29th (IFo) and 12 (ten males and two females including some displaying) at Woodhorn Flashes on 11th (GB). One to five were at Arcot Pond, Budle Bay, Big Waters NR, Bothal Pond, Hoppen Kiln Pond, Howdon, Low Newton and West Stobswood Pool.

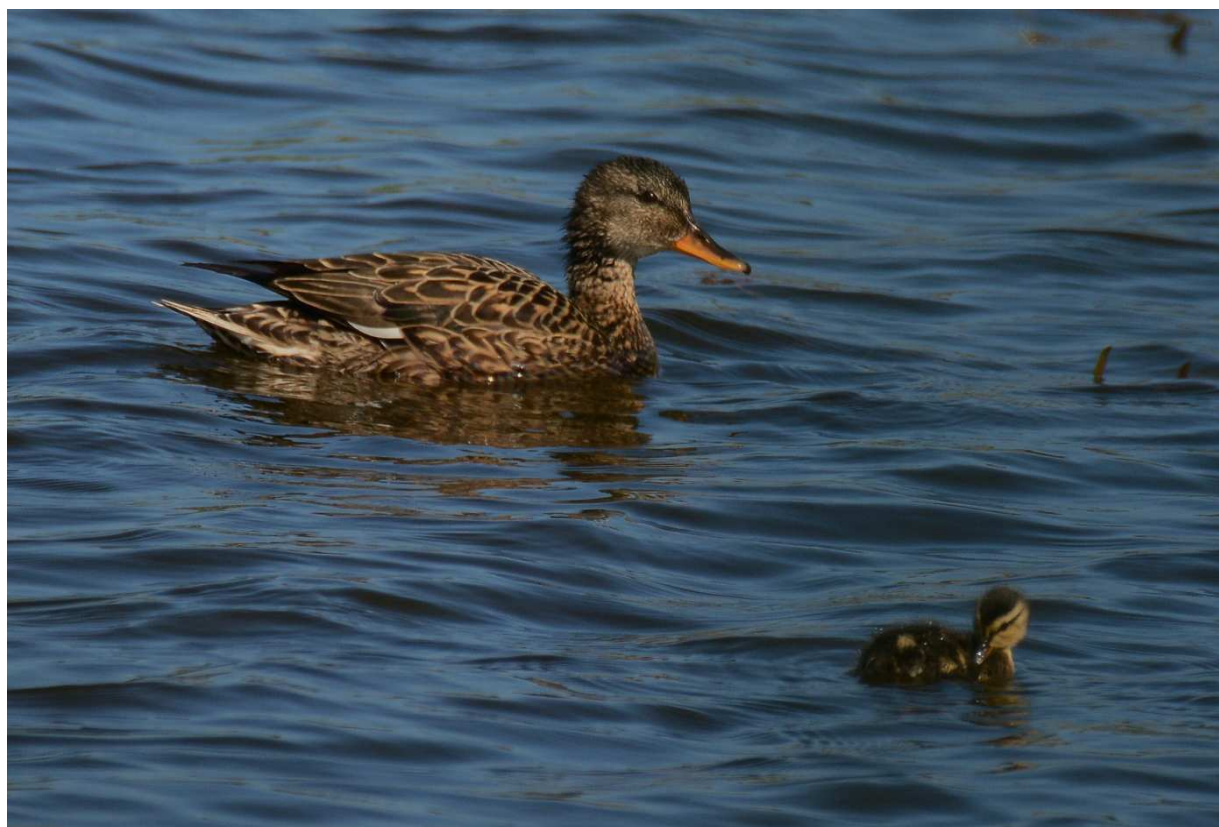


**Mallard** *Anas platyrhynchos*

Peak counts were 56 at Big Waters NR on 16th, 50 at Derwent Reservoir on 15th (JMA), 43 were at Grindon Lough on 7th (MRS), 39 at Gosforth Park NR during the month (NHSN), 34 at Leazes Park (Newcastle) on 14th (DM), 25 in the Tweed Estuary on 6th (MHu) and Linton Ponds on 30th and 20 at Ladyburn Lake on 2nd, Branton GP on 6th and Cresswell Pond on 30th (JMA). One to ten adults were also noted at Exhibition Park (Newcastle), East Chevington and Ellington Pond. Additional breeding data are tabulated below.

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Ladyburn Lake	3	12 (6,3,3)	LJM on 28th
Hedgeley GP	2	17 (11,6)	LJM on 14 th
Bothal Pond	2	15 (10, 5)	TD on 18th
Arcot Pond	2	11 (7,4)	LJM on 17th
Greenlee Lough	2	8 (5,3)	MRS on 7th
Linton Ponds	2	14 (7,4,3)	CDH on 4th (4,3) JMA on 30th (7)
Woodhorn Flashes	1	11	GB on 11th
Big Waters	1	10	GB on 8th new brood
Castle Island	1	9	STH on 23 rd
Grindon Lough	1	6	MRS on 7th new brood
Killingworth Lake	1	6	LJM on 8th
Norham	1	6	MHu on 5th
Cresswell Pond	1	5	LJM on 28th
Derwent Reservoir	1	5	IFo on 29th new brood
Druridge Pools	1	5	JMA on 30th new brood
Lower Ouseburn Byker	1	5	DM on 8th
West Ord	1	5	MHu on 5th
Monks' House Pool	1	3	JMA on 28th
Hapenny Woods Blyth	1	2	LJM on 26th

An unknown number of further broods were also noted in Holywell Dene during the month (RJP).



A Mallard tends her single duckling by Tim Dean

**Garganey** *Anas querquedula*

A male was at the Budge Fields (Druridge Pools) from 2nd-5th (TRD/ADMc) and a female was at Linton Ponds on 4th (GB/LAR).

**Shoveler** *Anas clypeata*

Up to three (two males) were at Druridge Pools from 5th-10th (GB/TRD), two males were at Monks' House Pool on 8th (TRD/JD and a female was at Big Waters on 16th (GB).

**Pochard** *Aythya ferina*

Most records came from Bothal Pond where a maximum of 17 (14 males) were noted on 26th (TF/JFa *et al.*). Elsewhere a pair was at Gosforth Park NR throughout the month, two drakes at Killingworth Lake on 18th, a single drake at Cresswell Pond on 28th and a female on Arcot Pond on several dates. Breeding data are tabulated below.

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Swallow Pond	1	6	SPP on 10th
Bothal Pond	1	3	TRD on 11th

**Tufted Duck** *Aythya fuligula*

Five flew N at Seaton Sluice on 25th (SSWT). The peak counts were 26 (one female) at Druridge Pools on 21st (MSH), 24 at Castle Island on 27th (STH), 21 at Bothal Pond on 26th (TD), 20 at Branton Pond on 6th (JMA), Killingworth Lake on 28th (LJM) and Cresswell Pond on 30th (JMA). During the month 11 were at Linton Ponds, 10+ at West Stobswood Pool and ten at Stocksfield Pond with four to seven noted at Arcot Pond, Gosforth Park NR, Howdon, Jesmond Dene, Leazes Park (Newcastle) and Monks' House Pool.

**Eider** *Somateria mollissima*

The largest gatherings were 187 predominantly males at Fenham Flats on 5th, 57 off St Aidan's Dunes (Seahouses) on 28th (JMA) 52 off Newbiggin (Church Point) on 29th and 30 off Newbiggin (Beacon Point) on 25th (STH). Groups of 11 to 18 were seen at Berwick North Shore, Blyth Estuary and Tweed Estuary.

Additional breeding data are tabulated below.

Locality	No. of broods/crèches	No. of young	Observer/notes
Amble Harbour	5	40	TRD on 7th
St Aidan's Dunes Seahouses	2+	13	JMA on 28th
Blyth Estuary	2	5 (3,2)	AC/LJM believed locally bred from 4th
Budle Bay	1	10	MSH on 6th
Seahouses Harbour	1	5	JMA on 28th

**Common Scoter** *Melanitta nigra*

Significant N passage was noted during the month especially on 29th when 435, including a melanistic bird with white wings, flew past at Seaton Sluice (SSWT) and 400 were noted in 1 hour 30 minutes at Newbiggin (STH). On 22nd at St Mary's Island 150-200 were noted on passage (SPP) and at Seaton Sluice a further 116 were recorded from 1st-25th. Flypast counts were noted of 61 at Newbiggin on 11th (STH), 31 at St Mary's Island on 17th (MSH), 30+ at Ross Sands on 5th (JL) and 20 at Annstead Point on 6th. The peak offshore count was 40+ at Fenham Flats on 5th (JL), whilst 20 were at Berwick North Shore on 2nd and five at Stag Rocks on 6th.

**Velvet Scoter** *Melanitta fusca*

One was on the sea at East Chevington on 5th (JL).

**Goldeneye** *Bucephala clangula*

Two broods continued to be noted at the confidential North Northumberland site. Five, including juveniles, were seen in Budle Bay on 29th where one had been present on 10th (GPK).

**Red-breasted Merganser** *Mergus serrator*

Two flew N at Seaton Sluice on 29th (SSWT). The peak count in Budle Bay was 5 on 17th (CGK/GPK). Two males were in the Blyth Estuary on 14th (LJM) and two were on Inner Farne on 19th (TF/JFa).

A Red-breasted Merganser  
Inner Farne  
5th June  
Eddie Douglas

**Goosander** *Mergus merganser*

Four flew N at Seaton Sluice on 4th (SSWT). Numbers of moulting non-breeding birds at Holy Island increased from 19 on 4th to 45 by 12th (ADM/TRD/IK). The peak count in the Blyth Estuary was 13 on 14th (LJM) and 12 were at West Ord on 7th (MHu). One to two were noted at Amble Harbour, Berwick North Shore, Tweed Estuary, Newbiggin, Tynemouth and Warkworth Weir.





Goosander breeding data are tabulated below.

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Blyth Estuary	1	4	GB on 4th very small young
Derwent Reservoir	1	4	AA on 17th
Harthope Valley	1	3	AA on 7th
Low Angerton River Wansbeck	1	3	IRD on 5th
Langleeford	1	1	TRD on 9th lost duckling calling for parent

#### **Red Grouse** *Lagopus lagopus*

The only record received was of two at Langleeford (Harthope Valley) on 9th (TRD).

#### **Grey Partridge** *Perdix perdix*

All records were of pairs, seen at Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Cocklawburn, Doddington, Horncliffe Mains, Lesbury, South Middleton and West Hartford.

#### **Pheasant** *Phasianus colchicus*

A single was at Holywell Dene on 4th and 5th (RJP).

#### **Red-throated Diver** *Gavia stellata*

Seaton Sluice Watch Tower reported a total of ten (eight N and 2 S) in 20 hrs of watching (SSWT). Three that flew N together past Newbiggin on 4th were all in breeding plumage (GB) and two summer-plumaged birds flew N past St Mary's on 17th (MSH). Singles were observed on the sea at both East Chevington and Snab Point on 5th (JL).

#### **Fulmar** *Fulmarus glacialis*

The maximum recorded at Seaton Sluice was 160 N in four hours on 2nd (SSWT). 22 nests were at Needles Eye (Berwick) on 8th (MHu) and one to ten were recorded at several other coastal localities.

#### **Manx Shearwater** *Puffinus puffinus*

Passage was low for the time of year with counts of 43 N past Seaton Sluice between 1st-5th (SSWT), 15 N at Annstead Point on 2nd (GPK), 13 N past Druridge on 26th (TF/JFa) and only single figures reported flying N past Newbiggin, St. Mary's and Snab Point (Cresswell) on other dates.

#### **Gannet** *Morus bassanus*

Movements past Seaton Sluice included 345 N in two hours on 1st, with similar numbers recorded between 1st to 4th (SSWT). One to ten were sighted offshore from several other locations.

#### **Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo*

31 were present at Castle Island (River Wansbeck) on 23rd (STH) with 20 counted between there and the River Wansbeck mouth, also on that date (CDH). The maximum at East Chevington was 18 on 30th (JMA) followed by 14 on a couple of further dates (STH/MSH). 12 were at St. Mary's on 16th (JMA) and WeBS counts produced eight at Berwick North Shore on 2nd and three in the River Tweed Estuary on 6th (MHu).

#### **Shag** *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

The only sightings at Seaton Sluice were three N on 5th (SSWT). A total of ca.200 were on the Farne Islands on 8th (TRD) and one to three were at Berwick North Shore, Coquet Island and Stag Rocks. The Needles Eye 'colony' doubled in size since last year with two nests found on 8th (MHu).

#### **Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta*

The River Wansbeck continues to be a county stronghold for this species with seven at Castle Island on 2nd (MSH/IK). Birds returned to Budle Bay with three there from 6th (TRD/MSH/CGK/GPK) and one to two were at many other coastal localities.

#### **Great White Egret** *Ardea alba*

The Druridge Pools bird that arrived in May remained until at least the 10th (MSH/AA *et al.*) then presumably the same bird was at Castle Island (River Wansbeck) on 13th (DLo).

A Great White Egret at Merryshields by Eddie Douglas on 8th June



#### **Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea*

14 was the maximum count at Howdon on 24th (CB) and 13 were in the River Tweed Estuary during a WeBS count on 6th (MHu). A minimum of six at Gosforth Park NR included fledged young from the heronry. Six were also in the Castle Island/River Wansbeck area on 19th and 23rd (STH/CDH) and five at Druridge Pools on 21st included a juvenile (LJM). One to four were at Arcot Pond, Berwick North Shore and Linton Ponds. One at Holywell Dene estuary attracted much attention whilst trying to deal with what was reported as either a large eel or even a snake (RJP).

**Little Grebe** *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) had the highest number with nine there on 26th (TF/JFa), followed by six adults at Swallow Pond on 28th (LJM). One to four were at Arcot Pond, Bank's Pond (Dinnington), Branton GP, Capheaton Lake, Craggside, Gosforth Park NR, Holy Island Lough, Linden Hall Golf Course, Linton Pond NR, Lynemouth Flash, Monk's House Pool and Newton Pool. A single trilling bird at Sweethope Lough was the observer's first record at this site (IK).

**Great Crested Grebe** *Podiceps Cristatus*

Both Derwent Reservoir and East Chevington NR held three pairs during the month (IFo/MSH), whilst five adults were at Killingworth Lake, comprising one pair with a single young and another pair on a nest (LJM). A pair with one chick was at Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) throughout the month (TF/JFa) and the pair with two chicks present at Big Waters in May had reduced to a single chick by 3rd (GB). One to three were at several other typical localities.

**Red Kite** *Milvus Milvus*

Only one record this month of a bird at Snods Edge on 3rd (IFo).

**Marsh Harrier** *Circus aeruginosus*

On 5th a male was at Widdrington Moor Lake (JL) and a female appeared to roost in the reeds at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN) and a juvenile flew South over Backworth Pond on 6th (SPP). Single males and females were noted at East Chevington on several dates and a male was soaring over Red Row on 14th (MSH).

**Hen Harrier** *Circus cyaneus*

Ringtails were seen at a couple of sites on 12th, 23rd & 28th (GM *per* STH/*per* PCF).

**Goshawk** *Accipiter gentilis*

At least 2 young were fledged from a regular site during the month (IK).

**Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter nisus*

Again only single birds were seen this month at Belford, Cramlington, Cresswell Pond, Ellington, Longbenton (Newcastle), Longhoughton and Red Row.



A Sparrowhawk at Biddlestone on 5th June by Mike Carr

**Common Buzzard** *Buteo buteo*

The only multiple sighting involved two birds at Whitley Mill (Hexham) on 3rd (AJN). Single birds were reported from Alnwick, Ashington, Bellasis Bridge (Blagdon), Cramlington, Cresswell Pond, Edlingham, Ellington, Lesbury, Morpeth, Prestwick, Widdrington Station and Woodhorn Flash.



**Osprey** *Pandion haliaetuss*

A bird at Derwent Reservoir on 2nd caught a fish at the first attempt (IFo). Four pairs were reported nesting in the Kielder area this year (MDF). (Great news - Ed.)

**Water Rail** *Rallus aquaticus*

Gosforth Park NR had three plus birds during the month (NHSN) and single birds were either heard or seen at Arcot Pond on 5th (STH) and at Cresswell Pond on six dates (ADMc/MSH).

**Moorhen** *Gallinula chloropus*

Broods were recorded at Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Holy Island Lough, Jesmond Dene, Killingworth Lake, Leazes Park (Newcastle) nest building was observed at Wallsend Dene on 19th (CDH).

**Coot** *Fulica atra*

48 birds were at Bothal Pond with six nests noted on 18th (TD) and 14 birds were at Linton Pond on 5th (CDH) and 12 at Arcot Pond on 18th (DM). Broods were noted at Arcot Pond, Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Howdon, Cresswell Pond, Killingworth Lake and Leazes Park (Newcastle).

**Avocet** *Recurvirostra avosetta*

A pair were incubating on 21st at Cresswell Pond NR which increased to two pairs incubating with another pair being chased off on 23rd (MSH). Earlier in the month only singles had been reported from this site. At another confidential site in the south east up to three pairs were suspected of nesting earlier in the month but by mid-month no signs of breeding were observed. At any one time, up to two birds were noted at other sites in the south east of the county.

**Oystercatcher** *Haematopus ostralegus*

Sightings of birds with breeding evidence included: two half-grown young with an adult at Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) on 4th (GB) where a juvenile was also seen on 26th (TD); a bird sitting on nest at Castle Island on 5th, where a juvenile was noted on 19th (STH); six adults with two young at Ryal Mootlaw Quarry on 5th (ALT); two adults with three juveniles flying around Southfield Green (Cramlington) on 27th (DM). Other reports with no mention of breeding included 29 at Newbiggin on 11th (GB), 27 at Cresswell Pond on 2nd (STH); also on 2nd, 26 birds at Berwick North Shore (MHu). Further reports of 15 or less birds came from a variety of sites.

**Golden Plover** *Pluvialis apricaria*

Evidence of an early autumn return was in evidence from 23rd with eight birds at Beacon Point increasing to 19 on 25th (STH). Numbers increased further on 26th when 20 "Northern" race birds were seen in full breeding plumage on Holy Island (IK).

**Grey Plover** *Pluvialis squatarola*

No sightings reported.

**Lapwing** *Vanellus vanellus*

Inland sites dominated reports of birds with breeding evidence: 50-60 birds, "many with young" were noted at Allendale, Acton Moor on 9th (ASJ); 28 with young were counted at Blanchland Moor on 9th (ASJ); and on the same day ten pairs with young were recorded at Ridley Common (ASJ). Further toward the coast, two fully fledged juveniles were part of six birds seen at Big Waters on 8th (GB) and two downy young were accompanied by an adult on 4th at Bothal Pond, Coney Garth (GB). Counts without any reference to breeding included: more than 70 birds at Hoppen Kiln (Lucker) on 28th (CGK/GPK); 21 at Bothal Pond on 18th (TD), followed by a peak count of 33 on 21st (TF/JFa); and counts of six or fewer from Gosforth Park NR and Howdon,



A Lapwing has a stretch at Allendale. By Alan Jack

**Little Ringed Plover** *Charadrius dubius*

Two inland sites provided sightings with confirmed breeding and a further sighting toward the coast also provided confirmed breeding. A number of other sites in the south east also reported birds but without evidence of breeding.

**Ringed Plover** *Charadrius hiaticula*

Sixty birds were reported from the Blyth Estuary on 3rd (AC), a number which had declined to 21 on 4th (GB). 23 birds were seen at St Mary's Island on 13th (AC) and 16 at Druridge Pool NR on 3rd (MSH) with six at Derwent Reservoir on 22nd (IFo). Sightings of four or fewer birds came from Blagdon (Brenkley), Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), East Chevington, Hedgeley GP, Lynemouth Flash, Newbiggin, Long Nanny mouth (Newton) and Airy Holm Reservoir (Shotleyfield).

**Whimbrel** *Numenius phaeopus*

A steady but small number of birds were seen along the coast throughout the month. Singles were seen at Hauxley on 5th (NFO), Blyth Estuary on 13th (AC), two were seen at Longhoughton on 13th (TB), more singles at Cresswell Pond on 21st (TB), Newbiggin on 28th (STH) and Seaton Sluice on 29th (SSWT).

**Curlew** *Numenius arquata*

The only report of breeding came from Acton Moor (Allendale) where nine displaying birds, some with young, were seen on 9th (ASJ). Other reports included 140 at Budle Bay on 26th (CGK/GPK), 17 at Cresswell Pond on 28th (MSH), 15 adults at Derwent Reservoir on 29th (IFo) and 12 at Newbiggin on 29th (STH). Single-number counts were reported from Berwick; Blyth, Howdon and the Wansbeck Estuary.



A young Curlew strides past Alan Jack at Allendale

**Black-tailed Godwit** *Limosa limosa*

Five birds were reported on 17th at Druridge Pools NR (IRD) which decreased to three on 21st (MSH). Twelve birds were then seen on 26th (TF/JFa) and on 28th (MSH). Four birds were recorded at Low Newton scrape on 7th (TRD) and a single at Budle Bay on 27th (GPK).

**Bar-tailed Godwit** *Limosa lapponica*

The over-summering flock at St Cuthbert's Island (Holy Is) reached 225 on 25th with five birds in breeding plumage.



**Turnstone** *Arenaria interpres*

Few reported this month with one to three at the Long Nanny, Farne Islands and Newbiggin between 7th-11th (GB/TRD).

**Knot** *Calidris canutus*

Lindisfarne again held the largest numbers with 230 winter-plumaged birds at St Cuthbert's Island on 25th (IK). Two to three were seen at Newbiggin, Cresswell Pond and Seaton Sluice between 21st and 28th. A scarce inland record was of an immature feeding on settling pools at Mootlaw Quarry (Ryal) on 21st (ALT). Not surprisingly, this was the first record for this site.

**Ruff** *Calidris pugnax*

Birds continued their stay at Druridge Pools with a maximum of seven noted (five males, two females) on 2nd, with much display noted. However, only two males remained by 17th. (STH/TRD/JD/MSH *et al.*) Singles were at Bell's Farm Pond (Cresswell) and Derwent Reservoir on 3rd with the last at Monks' House Pool on 19th.

**Curlew Sandpiper** *Calidris ferruginea*

The only bird reported this spring was at the Blyth Estuary on 3rd (AC/STH).

**Sanderling** *Calidris alba*

At Seaton Sluice a total of 62 moved north between 1st-2nd (SSWT). Four were at Newbiggin on 6th and one to two summer-plumaged birds were at Fenham Flats and the Long Nanny from 5th-7th.

**Dunlin** *Calidris alpina*

Northward passage involved ten past Seaton Sluice between 1st-2nd (SSWT) and four at Alnmouth on 11th. Six adults were at Cresswell Pond on 28th (MSH). The maximum count at Grindon Lough was five on 18th where 'singing' was heard on 2nd (TRD/JD/MRS). One to two were at Derwent Reservoir, Lynemouth Flash, Newbiggin and Druridge pools between 2nd-29th.

**Red-Necked Phalarope** *Phalaropus lobatus*

The summering female at Grindon Lough continued to be reported all month (MRS/TRD/JD/TB).

**Common Sandpiper** *Actitis hypoleucos*

A peak of nine was at Derwent Reservoir on 30th with six to seven regularly noted during the month (IFo). Four late migrants (or early returners) were at Castle Island on 29th. One to three were at Cresswell Pond, Budle Bay, Whether Hill (Ingram), Thrum Mill (Rothbury), Breamish Valley, Branton GP, Bywell Bridge and Caistron.

**Wood Sandpiper** *Tringa glareola*

Two were seen at Bothal Pond on 24th (TF/JFa). Singles were reported from Druridge Pools on 3rd and 15th.

**Redshank** *Tringa totanus*

The first six birds returned to Howdon on the 30th (CB). Six were at Derwent Reservoir on 29th with four regularly seen there all month (IFo). Six were also at Newbiggin on 28th (STH). The only other reports were four at the Blyth Estuary and three at Druridge Pools.

**Woodcock** *Scolopax rusticola*

Birds were less in evidence this month. Four were noted at Slaley Forest on 27th (PC). Singles were at Coronation Wood (Harthope Valley) and Beanley Wood.

**Snipe** *Gallinago gallinago*

Good numbers of displaying birds were noted this month. Six were displaying on Acton Moor (Allendale) on 9th (ASJ). Three were drumming at Lambley on 26th (MRS) and Garleigh Moor (Rothbury) on 29th (ASJ). Single 'drumming' birds were seen at Druridge pools, Prestwick Carr, Broomlee Lough, Debdon (Rothbury), Whether Hill (Ingram) and Rothley Lake during the month.

A Snipe at Allendale  
Alan Jack

**Arctic Skua** *Stercorarius parasiticus*

Four flew N at Seaton Sluice between 2nd-9th (SSWT). Northbound singles were at the Long Nanny on 7th, St Mary's Island on 17th and Tynemouth on 19th. A single was also at Tynemouth on 18th.



**Long-tailed Skua** *Stercorarius longicaudus*

An immature flew N at St Mary's Island on 4th (SPP) and an adult flew S, close in at Tynemouth on 18th (DRW/MK).

**Great Skua** *Stercorarius skua*

Reports of singles flying N at Seaton Sluice on 3rd (SSWT), St Mary's Island on 4th (SPP), Snab Point on 5th (JL) and off Druridge pools on 26th (TF/JFa).

**Auk** *sp*

At St Mary's Island, 22 flew N during mid-morning on 17th (MSH). Large numbers of auks were recorded moving N from 1st-5th, detailed below (SSWT *et al.*).

**Puffin** *Fratercula arctica*

At Seaton Sluice 500 and 230 flew N on 1st and 5th (SSWT) with smaller numbers recorded elsewhere on a few other dates. At the breeding colonies, ca.2,000 were counted on Coquet Island on 7th and 500 were recorded on the Farne Islands on 8th (TRD).



A pair of one of our most photogenic birds. Puffins on Inner Farne by Tim Dean on 8th June

**Razorbill** *Alca torda*

On 2nd and 5th respectively, maximum N movement was 1,110 in four hours and 1,370 in two hours, with smaller numbers noted during other days from 1st-5th (SSWT). On 4th, significant movement N was also noted at Newbiggin (GB) and St Mary's Island (SSP). At Berwick, Needles Eye, 88 nests were counted with 26 birds on the sea (MHu) and a count of ten came from the Farne Islands on 8th (TRD).



A Razorbill

Inner Farne

18th June

Steve Barrett



**Guillemot** *Uria aalge*

Very large numbers flying N were recorded from 1st-5th with maximum counts as follows; at Seaton Sluice on 2nd and 5th respectively, 2,750 in 4 hours and 4,000 in 2 hours and at Newbiggin 150 in 2 hours on 4th (GB/LAR). On other dates, northerly movement of up to 30 was also recorded from the Druridge Bay area (TRD) and 3 to 10 were noted at Bamburgh Stag Rocks, Berwick North Shore, Cocklawburn, Coquet Island and Cresswell Snab Point (TRD/MHu).

A Guillemot spots Tim Dean on Inner Farne on 8th June

**Little Tern** *Sternula albifrons*

The Long Nanny NT Wardens reported a total of 18 pairs nesting in the colony on 21st (EC/JSB) but the only other record from here was of three birds on 7th (TRD). Two were recorded elsewhere at East Chevington (TF/JFa) and moving N at Newbiggin (STH).

**Sandwich Tern** *Sterna sandvicensis*

The Seaton Sluice observers recorded maximum totals of 230 N in 3 hours on 4th and 100 S in 2 hours on 29th (SSWT). Coquet Island held ca.200 on 7th and the Farne Islands 100 on 8th (TRD). Maximum concentrations away from the breeding colonies were 94 at Newbiggin (STH), 56 in the roost on St Cuthbert's Island (Holy Island) (IK) and 10 at East Chevington (TRD). One to seven were at seven other widespread sites between Berwick and Cresswell Pond, including a record from Branton GP of six circling over the site in the early morning of 10th (MJC).

**Common Tern** *Sterna hirundo*

At breeding sites eight pairs were on nests at Gosforth Park NR with the first young hatched at mid-month (NHSN) and on 7th, four pairs appeared to be on nests on the raft at Whittle Dene Reservoirs (EC/JSB); at the latter site on 30th were three fully grown young and eight small young (EC/JSB). Gatherings at other sites were ten at East Chevington (TRD) and four at Howdon (CB) with one to two at Coquet Island, Cramlington, Cresswell Pond, East Chevington, Monks' House Pool, Shotleyfield (Airy Holm Reservoir) and the River Wansbeck Estuary.

**Roseate Tern** *Sterna dougallii*

From 3rd-4th, six flew N at Seaton Sluice (SSWT) with two at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) towards the month end (STH) and one-two on the Farne Islands on 19th and 25th (AA/TF/JFa).

Roseate Tern

Coquet Island

7th June

Tim Dean





**Arctic Tern** *Sterna paradisaea*

At the breeding colonies rough estimates of numbers on 7th-8th were as follows, Long Nanny ca.1,200, Coquet Island ca.1,000 and Farne Islands ca.1,000 (all TRD).



An Arctic Tern chick makes a meal of its parent's tail  
Tim Dean on Inner +Farne 8th June

**Kittiwake** *Rissa tridactyla*

Significant movement N was noted at Seaton Sluice with a maximum of 750 in 3 hours on 4th and similar large numbers were recorded there between 1st-5th (SSWT). Impressive numbers of breeding birds were found during a detailed count at the Newcastle City Centre breeding sites. On the north side of the Tyne 338 nests were on the Tyne Bridge (tower and bridge), 56 on the Guildhall, 43 on the Quayside buildings and 30 on the Dean St. railway bridge; on the Gateshead side of the river, 188 nests were on the Tyne Bridge (tower and bridge) and 100 on the Baltic Centre (DM). Counts at various coastal breeding colonies included 820 pairs at Berwick, Needles Eye (MHu), ca.1,000 on the Farne Islands and ca.300 on Coquet Island (TRD). A sandbank roost at Spittal, Sandstell Point held 186 on 12th (MHu) and during the first week ten to 20 were recorded in the River Tweed Estuary and Berwick North Shore (MHu) with 10 moving N at Druridge (TRD/JD).



Kittiwake

Howick

Alan Jack



**Bonaparte's Gull** *Chroicocephalus philadelphia*

This extremely rare visitor, the 1st-summer bird first seen in late May, stayed throughout the month being seen daily and by numerous observers (Birdguides/TRD/STH/CDH). It remained extremely faithful to Castle Island as a roosting place and on the River Wansbeck Estuary nearby, downstream of the A189 flyover, where it spent most of each day.



The Wansbeck Estuary Bonaparte's Gull by Tim Dean on 2nd June

**Black-headed Gull** *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

At the Gosforth Park NR, four pairs nested on the platform and although at least nine young hatched, all were predated by otters after they left the safety of the nest site, still unable to fly, possibly as a result of insufficient food from the adults (NHSN). At Hauxley NWT, 140 were present on 30th when 40 were also on the sea at Hauxley (JMA). Small gatherings of 10-50 were seen at ten widespread coastal localities and also at Greenlee Lough (JMA/MRS/MHu) throughout the month.



A young Black-headed Gull on Inner Farne  
Tim Dean on 8th June

**Little Gull** *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

Summering birds, mainly 1st-summers, were recorded at Widdrington Moor Lake where a maximum of seven were present on 5th (JL) with one to three seen on various dates throughout, at Cresswell Pond and Druridge Pools (TRD/JD/MSH/IRD/NFO) and elsewhere, singles were at Big Waters NR (SPP), the Long Nanny (AA) and an adult at Beacon Point, Newbiggin on 25th (STH).

A little Gull at Druridge Pools

Tim Dene 2nd June

**Mediterranean Gull** *Larus melanocephalus*

Two immatures were at Newbiggin on 23rd (STH) but all records on other dates were of single immatures at Cresswell Pond, Morpeth and Newbiggin (STH/ADM/TF/JFa) and an adult at Linden Hall GC on 29th, a first record there for the observer (NFO).

**Common Gull** *Larus canus*

The only record comprised two immature birds at Howdon on 2nd, described as 'unusual' at that site (CB).

**Lesser Black-backed Gull** *Larus fuscus graelsii*

Double-figure counts were 16 in Jesmond Dene on 5th (MJCo) and 13 immatures at Derwent Reservoir on 2nd (IFo). Elsewhere, seven-eight were at the Blyth industrial/quayside breeding sites (LJM), six at Bedlington (TB), four at Exhibition Park (DM), three occupying a two-nest breeding site at Wallsend, Davy Bank, (CDH) and one to two at Arcot Pond, Berwick North Shore, Leazes Park and the River Tweed Estuary.

**Herring Gull** *Larus argentatus argenteus*

Breeding records comprised 25 nests with 57 young at the Blyth Riverside Industrial Estate (LJM), four nests at North Blyth staithes (STH) and two well grown young at Wallsend, Davy Bank (CDH). The largest concentrations were 265 on the River Tweed Estuary (MHu), 200 at Roddam (JMA), 105 at Berwick, North Shore (MHu), 100 at St Mary's Island and Stocksfield (JMA). Elsewhere, 30-50 were at Cullercoats, the Long Nanny, Shiremoor and Tynemouth (JMA) with one to ten at Exhibition Park and Leazes Park DM).

**Great Black-backed Gull** *Larus marinus*

The cliffs at Berwick Needles Eye held a pair with four young on 8th (MHu). At the Long Nanny on 28th, 50 were recorded (JMA) and 30 were in Budle Bay on 27th (CGK/GPK); elsewhere 12 were at the Amble/Warkworth weir, ten at East Chevington and five in the River Tweed Estuary.

**Rock Dove** *Columba livia*

Present at Jesmond Dene on 5th in unspecified numbers (MJCo).

**Stock Dove** *Columba oenas*

One large count of 38 at Howdon on 10th (CB), five feeding by hide at Craggside (Rothbury) on 25th (JD), four at Jesmond Dene on 18th (MJCo) and Tynemouth on 28th (CB) with one to four at Holywell Dene and in an Old Hartley garden during the month (RJP). Three were at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 26th with one to two at four other locations.

**Woodpigeon** *Columba palumbus*

Up to 15 in Holywell Dene, nine in Jesmond Dene on 12th and one to five visiting an Old Hartley Garden during the month (RJP/MJCo).

**Collared Dove** *Streptopelia decaocto*

An impressive 14 in a garden at Ellington on 14th (TB) and one in an Old Hartley garden on 5th a rare visitor here (RJP).

**Cuckoo** *Cuculus canorus*

Three calling males were at Harthope Valley on 9th and Wanneys on 19th (TRD/IK) with two at Harthope on 7th & 14th and at Hope on 8th. Singles were at 10 other widespread localities.



**Barn Owl** *Tyto alba*

All reports were of singles at Rothbury on 1st, West Hartford on 2nd, Beal and Holy Island on 4th, Harthope Valley on 7th & 14th, Bothal Pond on 7th, Cresswell Pond on 13th, West Stobswood Pool on 15th, Causey Park Bridge (Morpeth) on 18th and Drurdige Pools on 26th.

**Little Owl** *Athene noctua*

Present all month at Shiremoor (CGK) with singles at Stannington on 15th (TH/JFa). Druridge on 30th (MSH) and Derwent Reservoir on the same date (IFo).

**Tawny Owl** *Strix aluco*

A family group, two adults and two young, were heard at dusk on 5th from the observer's garden at Fulbeck (Morpeth) (TD). Singles called most evenings during the month at Rothbury and at Beanley Wood on 21st (TRD/JD).

**Long-eared Owl** *Asio otus*

A single male was at Swallow Pond on 28th (SPP).

**Short-eared Owl** *Asio flammeus*

Two to three were regularly present at Holy Island during the month without any indication of breeding (IK/ASH/ADM) with a late bird at Brunswick (Wideopen) on 8th (GB).

**Nightjar** *Caprimulgus europaeus*

Five at Slaley Forest were a male, female and two to three other churring birds (PC) with a male and female churring and seen in flight at Beanley Wood on 21st (TRD/JD)

**Swift** *Apus apus*

Around 140 fed over the Tweed at West Ord on 5th (MHu), 100 over fields at Old Hartley on 29th (ASJ), 60 North at Seaton Sluice Watch Tower on 29th (SSWT) with 50 at Castle Island (R. Wansbeck) on 5th and brought down by mist at Branton GP on 10th (STH/MJC). Up to 45 were on territory at Hillheads (Whitley Bay) on 20th, 40 at Killingworth Lake on 15th and Cullercoats on 20th with up to 15 seen regularly at Holywell Dene. Two to six were at six other locations.



A Species not often photographed, a Swift goes to nest  
Alnwick Castle on 5th June by Eddie Douglas

**Kingfisher** *Alcedo atthis*

Two juveniles seen together at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN) with singles at Caistron on 5th (JD), Highfoot and nesting at R. Wansbeck from 4th to 7th (ADMc), Stamfordham on 13th (EC), Riverside (Rothbury) on 28th (JMA) and Budle Bay on 30th.

**Green Woodpecker** *Picus viridis*

More than one at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN) with singles at Prestwick Carr on 3rd (PCF), Whitley Mill (Hexhamshire) on the same date (AJN), Wingates on 5th (ASJ), at probable nest at Stonehaugh Village on 10th (EC/JSB), Riding Mill and Rothley Lake on 18th (JMA/TD).

**Great Spotted Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos major*

The peak count was seven at Gosforth Park NR, several pairs having young (NHSN) with a pair feeding two chicks at Mootlaw Quarry (Ryal) on 14th (ALT) and likewise in the observer's garden at Tynemouth on 27th (CB). Three were seen at Holywell Dene, Low Angerton on 5th and Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 25th with one to two at 12 other widespread localities.

**Kestrel** *Falco tinnunculus*

Two birds were on Holy Island on 4th (ADM). The only other records involving single birds were noted at 11 sites during the month by one observer (TB).

**Merlin** *Falco columbarius*

No sightings reported this month.

**Hobby** *Falco subbuteo*

On 13th a bird flew over Cresswell Pond scattering the *hirundines* before flying directly over the hide (DLo).

**Peregrine** *Falco peregrinus*

Only two sightings this month involving single birds flying towards Budle Bay on 6th (TRD) and one at Lynemouth Sewage works on 22nd (TB).

**Ring-necked Parakeet** *Psittacula krameri*

On 10th one perched in a tree at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) was mobbed by Starlings (DM/GB) with one flying over Birds Nest Road (Wallsend) on 24th seen again on 26th (SPP).

**Magpie** *Pica pica*

Three at Jesmond Dene on 5th and two at Holywell Dene on 2nd & 13th the only counts (MJCo/RJP).

**Jay** *Garrulus glandarius*

A high count of six with one recently fledged juvenile at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN) during the month, a noisy family group of five at Lordenshaw on 5th (ASJ) with all other reports singles from seven other locations.

**Jackdaw** *Corvus monedula*

At Howdon 88 on 23rd (CB), with numbers increasing from eight to 20 by month end at Holywell Dene (RJP) and five at Jesmond Dene on 5th (MJCo).

**Rook** *Corvus frugilegus*

All reports from one observer with 150 at West Chevington on 2nd and Fourstones on 25th, 100 at Roddam on 6th, 50 at Prendwick on the same date, 25 at Melkridge on 25th and 15 at Cullernose Point on 28th (JMA).

**Carrion Crow** *Corvus corone*

At R. Blyth Estuary on 5th 60 were mainly in the Sleekburn confluence area (LJM), post-breeding flocks of 30 at Wanneys on 19th (IK) and one to eight at Holywell Dene, Jesmond Dene and Morpeth.

**Raven** *Corvus corax*

Family groups of seven (two adults and five juveniles) at Biddlestone on 5th (MJC) and six at Carey Burn (Harthope Valley) on 9th (TRD) with four overhead during a WeBS count at Broomlee Lough on 7th (MRS).

**Goldcrest** *Regulus regulus*

Three at Jesmond Dene on 18th (MJCo), two at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 19th with one there on 12th and at Dam Dykes (Cramlington) on 18th (DM).

**Blue Tit** *Cyanistes caeruleus*

Low numbers noted with five at Jesmond Dene on 5th (MJCo), three family parties at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 19th (DM) and three at Holywell Dene (RJP). At Kirkley Hall a poor breeding year was noted with three pairs fledging 22 young (IK).

**Great Tit** *Parus major*

Up to nine frequented an Old Hartley garden in the second half of the month (RJP), four at Jesmond Dene on 5th (MJCo) and four pairs fledging 18 young at Kirkley Hall (IK).

**Coal Tit** *Periparus ater*

A family party of six at Kirkhill (Morpeth) on 6th (IRD) with one to two in Holywell Dene and an Old Hartley garden (RJP).



**Willow Tit** *Poecile montanus*

Feeders at East Cramlington Pond LWT attracted two on 27th (STH) with one late singing bird at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 11th (NFO).

**Marsh Tit** *Poecile palustris*

One at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 5th remained throughout the month (NFO).

**Skylark** *Alauda arvensis*

Many birds still singing with more than 90 at Otterburn Ranges on 30th, 17 at Great Wanney Fell on 23rd, 16 at Wingates on 5th and Sweethope on 23rd, 14 at Simonside on 5th, 11 at Buteland Fell (Redesmouth) on 23rd (ASJ) with six to eight at Backworth, Holywell, Exhibition Park (Newcastle) and St Mary's.

**Sand Martin** *Riparia riparia*

Just two reports of six at Howdon on 3rd and two at Ellington on 26th (CB/TB).

A Swallow

Druridge Pools

Mike Carr

17th June

**Swallow** *Hirundo rustica*

More than 40 fed over Widdrington Moor Lake on 2nd (MSH), six nesting pairs at Foxhunters Estate (Whitley Bay) on 1st (ASJ) and five at Holywell Dene down on numbers in recent years (RJP).

**House Martin** *Delichon urbica*

At Old Hartley 45+ fed over fields on 12th (ASJ), 40 at Derwent Reservoir on 2nd (IFo), 30+ at Arcot Pond on 18th (DM), 30 at Breamish Valley on 5th (ASJ). Eleven pairs nested at Great Tosson on 5th, up to 20 at Holywell Dene, 12 at Howdon on 3rd, nine collected mud at Belsay Castle on 4th and four nests were at Needles Eye (Berwick).

**Long-tailed Tit** *Aegithalos caudatus*

A family party of eight juveniles was at Cramlington (Valley Park) on 19th (DM). Five were noted at Ingram, four at Howdon, three at Branton GP and a single in Jesmond Dene.

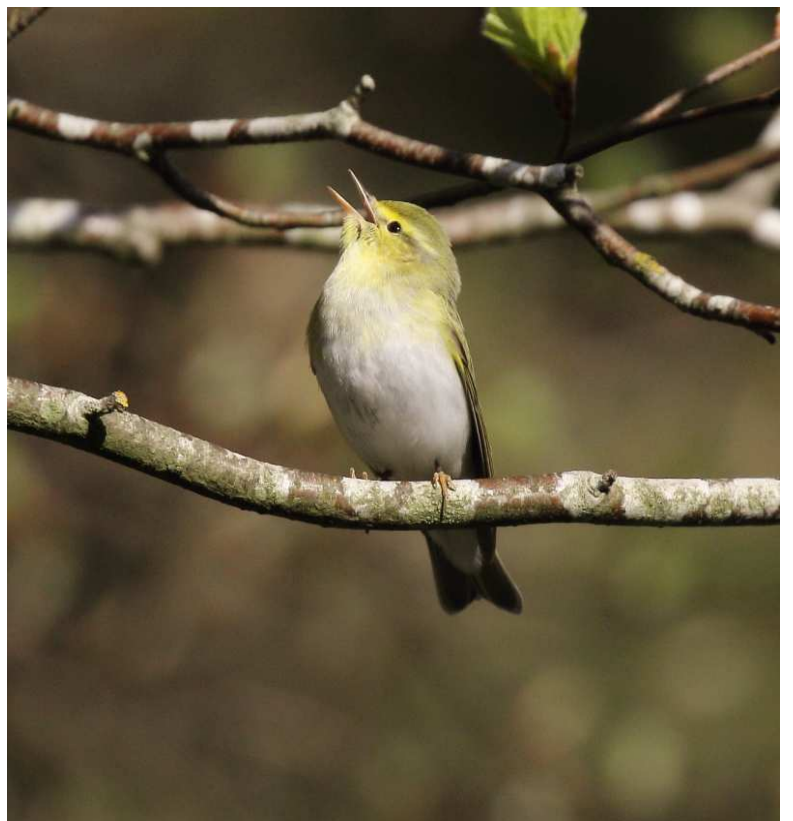
**Wood Warbler** *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

A dull individual at Blakehopeburnhaugh on 17th was the only report (TRD/JD).

A Wood Warbler sings

Sidwood

Alan Jack

**Chiffchaff** *Phylloscopus collybita*

Peak counts were seven at Jesmond Dene (MJCo), six at Gosforth Park NR and five in Holywell Dene. At Holy Island, four passage birds were noted on 4th and a late singing bird on 11th. A pair accompanied a fledged juvenile at Brunswick Green on 5th; three singing males were at the Wanneys and two at Howdon.

**Willow Warbler** *Phylloscopus trochilus*

A high count of 40+ singing males was made at Wingates on 5th, when 15 were also singing at Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) (ASJ). Six singing at Howdon on 10th was the only other report.

**Blackcap** *Sylvia atricapilla*

Counts of singing birds included eight at Kirkley Hall (IK), four at Jesmond Dene and three at Eshott and at Howdon.

**Garden Warbler** *Sylvia borin*

Six singing males were at Wingates on 5th (ASJ) and three+ from Benridge Moor-Beacon Hill on 4th. One to two were also reported from Big Waters, Cramlington (Valley Park), Dinnington, Ellington, Linden Hall and Rothbury.

**Lesser Whitethroat** *Sylvia curruca*

Singles were reported from Bank's Pond (Dinnington), Budle Bay, Druridge Bay CP, Howdon, Powburn and West Hartford.

**Whitethroat** *Sylvia communis*

Four were at Howdon on 3rd and two pairs at Cullernose Point on 28th. Three at Holywell Dene and a female with food for young at Arcot Lane were the only other reports.

**Grasshopper Warbler** *Locustella naevia*

Up to seven were 'reeling' at Ellington and six at West Hartford. Three singing birds were at Prestwick Carr and singles at Dinnington and Druridge Pools.

**Sedge Warbler** *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

Six singing males were at Arcot Pond on 18th (DM) and up to four were at Gosforth Park NR. Three were singing at Linton Ponds on 5th, two were at Holy Island (Snook) on 4th and a single at Cramlington (Valley Park).



A Sedge Warbler in full voice at St. Mary's by Alan Jack

**Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

The peak count from Gosforth Park NR was eight (NHSN). There were three territories at Ladyburn Lake; three were singing at Linton Pond NR and singles at the Blyth Estuary and at St Mary's Wetland. One to two singing males were also noted at Holy Island (Lough) throughout the month.

**Nuthatch** *Sitta europaea*

Breeding was confirmed at Gosforth Park NR, where the peak count of six+ included an adult with fledged young (NHSN); a pair was also feeding young at a nest hole in Leazes Park on 1st. Elsewhere two were at Jesmond Dene and singles at Arcot Hall GC, Bolam Lake, Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Holywell Dene and Rothbury.

**Treecreeper** *Certhia familiaris*

A pair with recently fledged young was at Gosforth Park NR and one to two were noted at Holywell Dene and Rothbury.

**Wren** *Troglodytes troglodytes*

The only reports were of up to five in Holywell Dene and Jesmond Dene.



**Starling** *Sturnus vulgaris*

Flocks of 30-75 adults with juveniles were noted at Alnwick, Hauxley, Newton Links, St Aidan's dunes and St Mary's Island (JMA).

**Dipper** *Cinclus cinclus*

Up to four in the Harthope Valley included a well-grown juvenile. Birds were noted regularly at two nest sites in Jesmond Dene but no juveniles were seen. One to two were also reported from Blakehopeburnhaugh, Rothbury and Thrum Mill.

**Blackbird** *Turdus merula*

Up to seven in a New Hartley garden included recently fledged young; five were at Holywell Dene (RJP) and four at Jesmond Dene.

**Song Thrush** *Turdus philomelos*

There were seven in Jesmond Dene on 5th (MJCo) and five were singing at High Newton on 29th (CB).

**Mistle Thrush** *Turdus viscivorus*

11 were at Derwent Reservoir on 25th (IFo) and ten at Swallow Pond on 28th were mainly fledged juveniles (LJM). Four were reported from Jesmond Dene, three at Prestwick Carr and a single at Linton ponds.

**Spotted Flycatcher** *Muscicapa striata*

Three were noted at Blakehopeburnhaugh and at Letah Wood (Hexham). Two were reported from Derwent Reservoir, Harthope Valley, Holy Island, Juniper (Hexhamshire), Linden Hall and Lordenshaw and a single at Ingram.

**Robin** *Erithacus rubecula*

One to three were reported from Holywell Dene, Jesmond Dene and Old Hartley.

**Redstart** *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Three singing males were at Lordenshaws on 5th and a pair with four fledged young was noted here on 30th (ASJ). Four singing males held territory at Rothley Lake and a pair was in likely breeding territory at Kirkley Hall. Elsewhere singles were noted at Allen Banks, Belsay Castle, Debdon and the Whitechapel (Bardon Mill) area.



A splendid cock Redstart at Lordenshaws by Alan Jack

**Whinchat** *Saxicola rubetra*

Well reported again this year, with 15 (three females) in the Breamish Valley on 5th and 11 males in Upper Coquetdale on 30th (ASJ). Three singing males were at the Wanneys on 19th (IK).

**Stonechat** *Saxicola rubicola*

In inland areas, three pairs with young were in the Wanneys area on 19th (IK), a pair with two fledged young was at Berwick Moor on 10th (MJC), a pair with two young was at West Hartford on 2nd and single males were noted at Harthope Valley and Lordenshaw. On the coast, a pair was feeding young in the nest at Holy Island on 4th; two were at Druridge Pools and at East Chevington and a single at the Long Nanny.

**Wheatear** *Oenanthe oenanthe*

13 were noted in Upper Coquetdale on 30th (ASJ), a female with three juveniles was at Ingram on 11th, two were at Harthope Valley and a single juvenile at Newbiggin.



A Wheatear at High Bleakhope  
19th June by Mike Carr

**Dunnock** *Prunella modularis*

One – two noted at Holywell and Jesmond Denes during the month.

**House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus*

Up to ten at garden feeders in Tynemouth and 20 at Marden Estate on several dates (CB/ASJ).

**Tree Sparrow** *Passer montanus*

Ten+ at Waren Mill on several dates was the monthly peak (CGK/GPK). Six at Cresswell and Holywell and five at Dinnington in the month, the latter a pair with three fledged young from garden nest box (ASJ/PCF). One-four noted at four further sites.

**Yellow Wagtail** *Motacilla flava*

A pair near Ingoe were probably nesting. Singles seen at Druridge, New Water Haugh (R.Tweed), Corbridge and Beal during June.

**Grey Wagtail** *Motacilla cinerea*

Four present on Newcastle Exhibition Park on 10th, consisted of an adult, two juveniles and a probable third juvenile (GB/DM). Four were also seen at Jesmond Dene on 28th. One-three noted at seven further localities, including a singing male in Newcastle's Northumberland Street on 7th, with other birds in Grainger Street and the Bigg Market in the city (NFO/DM).

**Pied Wagtail** *Motacilla alba*

A brood of five was raised using the natural site nest Swallows constructed in 2014 on Holy Island (IK). A fledged brood also of five was feeding on Whitley Bay mini -olf course on several dates (ASJ). Three birds were seen at Bywell Bridge on 5th (PCF). One-two noted at Howd0n and in Jesmond Dene during the month.



**Tree Pipit** *Anthus trivialis*

A minimum of four displaying males were at Wingates on 5th, with a pair feeding young in a nest and the male displaying at Simonside on 30th (ASJ). Two singing males at the Wanneys on 19th (IK). Singles were seen at Hope, Harthope and Blakehopeburnhaugh during the month.

**Meadow Pipit** *Anthus pratensis*

A drive through the Otterburn Ranges on 30th revealed a minimum of 70+ displaying males, while 20+ were noted at Simonside the same day, some feeding young (ASJ). The only other report received this month was of two song-fighting on Newcastle Town Moor on 10th (DM).

**Rock Pipit** *Anthus petrosus*

Males were displaying at Tynemouth and Cullercoats (2) and a single seen at St Mary's during the month (ASJ). No other reports received.

**Chaffinch** *Fringilla coelebs*

Seven locations in Jesmond Dene held singles on 18th (Mjco). One-four noted at Holywell Dene throughout the month (RJP).

**Bullfinch** *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

One-four seen at Holywell Dene and in a nearby garden during June (RJP). Two pairs fed at garden feeders in a Rothbury garden on many dates (TRD/JD). Singles at Valley Park (Cramlington) and Annitsford on 19th and 26th (DM).

**Greenfinch** *Carduelis chloris*

A pair fed fledged young at garden feeders at Marden Estate on several dates (ASJ). One or two in Holywell and Jesmond Denes.

**Linnet** *Carduelis cannabina*

The only large group consisted of 30 at Ellington on 20th (TB). Several pairs with young on the wing noted near Holywell on several dates and four birds in Wallsend Dene on 19th (ASJ/CDH).



A cock Linnet at Druridge Pools  
Mike Carr on 17th June

**Lesser Redpoll** *Carduelis caberet*

Young conifers at Wanneys held many singing/displaying males on 19th (IK). A family group seen at Simonside on 30th (ASJ). Three+ were at Linton Pond on 5th (MHS) and a single at Linden Hall on 4th (NFO).

**Crossbill** *Loxia curvirostra*

37 birds were counted at Cragside on 4th (MJC). A flock of 21 flew over Stonehaugh on 10th (EC/JSB). 12 birds dropped into trees at the Heugh (Holy Island) on 12th in foggy conditions (IK). One-two observed at five further sites, including one flying north at Tynemouth on 10th.

**Goldfinch** *Carduelis carduelis*

A family group of a pair with five young at feeders at Marden Estate all month (ASJ). Up to six noted at Holywell Dene and St Mary's on many dates (RJP/ASJ). One to two at Old Hartley and Jesmond Dene.

**Siskin** *Carduelis spinus*

Four attended garden feeders all month at Rothbury (TRD/JD). Four (a family party?) also in a Morpeth garden on 19th (TD). Up to three at Linden Hall during June (NFO).

**Yellowhammer** *Emberiza citrinella*

Numbers of singing males included 12 in the Callaly area on 5th, nine at Whitley Chapel on 9th and seven at Holywell on 12th (ASJ). No further reports received.

**Reed Bunting** *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Eight+ at Gosforth Park and at St Mary's (singing males) all month (NNHS/ASJ). Four were at Howdon on 30th with two present on 2nd (CB). Two singing males at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 26th and two at Arcot Pond on 18th. Singles seen in an Old Hartley garden on several dates and at Valley Park on 4th.

**ESCAPES, HYBRIDS AND BIRDS OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN****Escapes****Black Swan** *Cygnus atratus*

The individual on the River Tweed remained until at least 12th where it was seen at Tweed Dock (MHu).

**Bar-headed Goose** *Anser indicus*

Four adults were at Derwent Reservoir on 30th (IFo). Almost certainly the returning birds from previous years.

**Muscovy Duck** *Cairina moschata*

The drake noted at QE II CP in Ashington last month was again seen there on 1st (TB).

**Indian Peafowl** *Pavo cristatus*

A male was found on 11th displaying to residents of Valerian Drive, Heddon on the Wall at 6am (PCF)!

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Natural History Society of Northumbria, Seaton Sluice Watch Tower.

**Apologies for any accidental omissions****BULLETIN COMPILATION AND PRODUCTION**

This bulletin was compiled by Lindsay McDougall (Mute Swan to Ruddy Duck), Steve Laing (Red Grouse to Black-necked Grebe), Trevor Blake (Honey-buzzard to Crane), Tom Brewis (Avocet to Godwit), Clive Hampton (Turnstone to Skua), Eddie Crabtree (Puffin to Great Black-backed Gull), Tim Dean (Escapes, Hybrids and Unknown Origin, List of Contributors, Highlights), Peter Fletcher (Feral Pigeon to Red-rumped Swallow), Mike Richardson (Cetti's Warbler to Pied Flycatcher), Alan Jack (Dunnock to Corn Bunting), Kathy Evans (WeBS Coastal Counts) and Steve Holliday (WeBS Inland Counts).

Data Manager is Tom Brewis

Thanks to David Sanders of NNBC for providing data.

Proof reading was by Mike Smith. Mail distribution by Paul Stewart.

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**RECORD SUBMISSION**

Please email records for the month to [ntbc.records@googlemail.com](mailto:ntbc.records@googlemail.com)

Please email for a copy of the standard spreadsheet and other details.

Location names and grid references: Please use of standard location names and include grid references as this greatly increases the value of records in subsequent analyses. A 1km square grid reference is the ideal e.g. NY8067 for Grindon Lough, but 2km square references (tetrads) are also acceptable e.g. NY86D in this case. A list of localities and their tetrad grid references (tetrad/Locality List) can be downloaded from the 'Resources & Downloads' section of the Club website at <http://www.ntbc.org.uk> – the use of these names, wherever possible, would be highly appreciated.

Could club members ensure they to submit records direct to NTBC rather than just Birdtrack. There may be an assumption by some members this happens automatically. We do not want to miss records.



## PHOTOGRAPHS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Please keep submitting your articles, photographs, sketches and illustrations for the bulletin. Thanks again to those who have supplied the excellent photographs. Please send to Steve Barrett at [NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com](mailto:NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com)

It is preferable if you re-size your photos before sending and a suggested size is 640 x 480 pixels. Please ensure you include the following information with your submissions: name, species, date taken, locality.

Photographs will not be used elsewhere without the photographer's permission.

## MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Annual membership costs £10 for a junior, £30 for an individual, and £32 for a family.

For membership enquiries please contact [ntbc@jobentley.plus.com](mailto:ntbc@jobentley.plus.com)

Membership subscriptions were due at the beginning of October. If you internet bank you can pay online: please include your name in the ref. It is helpful if you email me to let me know when you've made the transfer [ntbc@jobentley.plus.com](mailto:ntbc@jobentley.plus.com)

If you decide to set up a standing order please date the first payment at least a fortnight from your posting date to allow time to process with the bank. You can also set up your standing order directly with your bank if you wish; just let me know.

Finally, if you know anyone who might like to join NTBC please pass on the club information - new members are always welcome.

**Jo Bentley - Hon Treasurer**

## NTBC WEB SITE

The Club website is an excellent resource for all interested in birds in the north-east. There are numerous interesting sections, including a photograph gallery, site information and trip reports together with extensive reference information for birding in our area. Please submit any new content for the website to the main club email address.

## NTBC SIGHTINGS PAGE

The Sightings Page contains current reports by members. Access is from the NTBC website and an email notification is available for new postings. Members need to submit a request to be added to the website, specifying the email address they wish to post from before they can submit sightings to [ntbcorg@gmail.com](mailto:ntbcorg@gmail.com)

## BIRDS IN NORTHUMBRIA 2015 - a request for photographs.

Photos are always welcome for consideration. All members are free to submit images (taken within the county during 2015) to the editor. Please send as jpeg image attachments to one or more emails, or copy to a disc and send to the address below. Larger files are preferred. Andy Mould, 10 Fairfield, Longbenton, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE12 8UF. Email: [highroller10@btinternet.com](mailto:highroller10@btinternet.com)

## RAPTORS, UPLANDS AND PEATLANDS

This national conference will be held at Sheffield from 9th to 10th September.

The full details are on <http://www.ukeconet.org/raptors.html>

## INLAND WeBS COUNTERS

Inland WeBS counters needed in the future! Although there are no inland sites available at the present time it is envisaged that opportunities for taking over a site will become available during the next year or two. If you are interested in lodging your name, home location and contact details in case a site becomes open please contact Steve Holliday email [stevoholiday@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:stevoholiday@hotmail.co.uk)

Steve Holliday

**HEN HARRIER DAY****7th AUGUST**

Hen Harrier Day is at Saltholme RSPB again this year, on Aug 7th, from 10.30h. This event is important in highlighting the problem of Harrier persecution. Recently, Chris Packham has really wound up the sporting estates by calling for a boycott of Marks and Spencer because they are about to stock grouse meat again in their London shops. Watch this space!!



A juvenile Hen Harrier at the Northumberland breeding site in 2007  
No prizes for identifying the ringer.  
By Steve Barrett



# Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

<http://www.ntbc.org.uk/>

Bulletin 2016 No 7

MONTHLY SUMMARY JULY 2016

3rd September 2016



## CONTENTS

WeBS inland

WeBS Coastal

Raptors Conference

Inland WeBS counters needed

NTBC AGM - 8th October



A Mediterranean Gull at Newbiggin by Jack Bucknall  
Not long ago a rare find along our coast

## CLASSIFIED LIST HIGHLIGHTS

Storm Petrel	One passed close past Seaton Sluice on 12th.
Bittern	Summering bird at Gosforth Park from 7th.
Red Kite	A pair raised two young in Tyne Valley. First successful breeding in county since 2010.
Marsh Harrier	All four young at East Chevington were seen flying together on 24th.
Temminck's Stint	One at Newton scrape on 12th.
Pectoral Sandpiper	Adult at Newton scrape on 25th.
Pomarine Skua	Adult with 'spoons' past Tynemouth on 9th.
Bonaparte's Gull	First-summer still at Wansbeck Estuary all month.
Hobby	Single sightings at Cresswell and East Chevington

## INDOOR MEETINGS

NTBC indoor meetings are held at Northern Rugby Club, McCracken Park, Great North Road, Newcastle, NE3 2DT starting at 7.00pm and generally finish between 9.00pm-9.30pm.

## 8th September 2016

### Fighting Bird Crime David Hunt

David Hunt is a Assistant investigations officer with the RSPB. David will be delivering a talk on the work of the RSPB investigations team looking at a number of cases involving Bird of Prey persecutions and exploring the challenging environments in which the team operates in.

## 13th October 2016

**Sea watching at KIELDER! – Martin Davison** Is it possible, to sea watch at a very inland site? Is it worth the effort? Are there "sea birds" at Kielder? Find out!

10th November 2016

**South East Scotland Bird Atlas – Mark Holling** During the years 2007-13, the Lothian and Borders branches of the SOC conducted a tetrad atlas across all of south-east Scotland, with fieldwork in both the winter and breeding seasons, similar to the Northumbria Bird Atlas project. Mark was one of the organisers of the survey and is part of the team which have been analysing and documenting the results. He will present a selection of the findings, many of which are of high conservation interest and, being so close, comparable to the findings in Northumberland

## FIELD TRIPS

The next field trip is an autumn visit to a popular estuary:  
25th September - Alnmouth

Please contact Steve Anderson for details [seaswan@btinternet.com](mailto:seaswan@btinternet.com)

## CLASSIFIED LIST

### Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

The favoured Tweed Estuary held peaks of 220 on 5th (KWY), 250 on 11th (JMA) and 282 on 21st (MHu). Peak counts elsewhere involved 76 at Killingworth Lake on 26th (LJM), 68 at QEII CP Lake on 18th (LJM), 43 at the Wansbeck Estuary (LJM), 28-29 at Castle Island and East Chevington, and 12 at Howdon. Two to nine were at nine further sites. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Castle Island	2	7 (6,1)	STH. Final total (includes brood reported in June)
Holywell Pond	1	7	LJM. On 31st
Whittle Dene Reservoirs	1	7	SR. On 4th.
Bank's Pond, Dinnington	1	2	PCF. On 16th. Not bred on site.
Newsham Pond	1	1	LJM. Well grown young on 10th.

An unattended, possibly abandoned, nest containing four eggs was noted at Shield on the Wall on 25th (MRS).

### Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

Four unseasonable adults were at New Water Haugh on the River Tweed on 10th, with two remaining on 13th. Presumably, the same four birds were again at the Tweed Estuary on 21st (MHu).

### Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

Two were at the Tweed Estuary on 21st (MHu).

### Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

30 flew E at Prestwick Carr on 21st (PCF). Derwent Reservoir attracted 400 on 3rd (JMA), 239 were at Airy Holm Reservoir on 24th (IFo), 196 (including at least 50 juveniles) were at Merryshields Farm GP (Stocksfield) during the month (DLe), 59-80 at Bothal Pond (TD), Grindon Lough (MRS) and Marden Quarry (KWY), and 34 at Budle Bay. Five to six were also at New Water Haugh and the Tweed Estuary.

### Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

A count of 121 at Castle Island on 1st included 21 young (STH). Other peak counts were 92 at Bothal Pond on 31st (TF/JFa), 62-65 at Killingworth and QEII CP Lakes (LJM) and the Tweed Estuary (MHu), and 15-29 at Alnmouth, Greenlee and Grindon Loughs, Newcastle Leazes Park and New Water Haugh. Seven were also at the Blyth Estuary. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods/crèches	No. of young	Observer/notes
Castle Island	3	21 (12, 7, 2)	STH. On 1st. Includes previous brood of 8 (now 7) and possibly earlier brood of 3 (now 2)
Bank's Pond, Dinnington	1	7	PCF. Previously reported brood fully fledged by 16th.

### Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

One was at Castle Island on 24th (DM/STH).

### Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

Seven were at Castle Island on 24th (DM/STH) and one at Cresswell Pond. A juvenile (not bred on site) was at Big Waters from 28th-31st (GB). Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods/crèches	No. of young	Observer/notes
Budle Bay	2	14	CGK/GPK. On 15th.
Castle Island	1	10	STH. Mid-sized young on 24th (as June?)
Howdon	1	3	CB. On 24th

### Mandarin *Aix galericulata*

A party of seven large juveniles was at Bakethin Reservoir on 3rd (TRD/JD).



**Wigeon** *Anas penelope*

One flew N at Tynemouth on 29th (DRW). Grindon Lough held 54 on 25th (MRS), and 14 at Derwent Reservoir on 28th (IFo). Three to four were at Budle Bay, Cresswell Pond and Low Newton scrape, and one to two at Druridge Pools, Gosforth Park NR and Newton Pool on occasional dates.

**Gadwall** *Anas strepera*

Peak counts were 18 at Bothal Pond on 20th (TF/JFa), 11 (pair plus nine large juveniles) at Castle Island on 30th (GB) and five to seven at Big Waters, Holywell Pond and Lynemouth (GB/MSH). Three to four were at Bothal Pond, Druridge Pools and Marden Quarry, and twos at Castron, East Chevington and Gosforth Park NR. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Ladyburn Lake	2	10 (7,3)	LJM. On 19th
Cresswell Pond	1	8	MSH/ADMc. On 15th
West Stobswood	1	7	AA. On 12th
Holywell Pond	1	1	LJM. On 31st

June Bulletin correction The photograph of a Mallard with young was a Gadwall.

**Teal** *Anas crecca*

A higher than average 178 flew N and six S at Seaton Sluice in 56 hours between 5th-27th, including 38 N on 5th (SSWT). Other northbound counts involved 20 at Druridge Bay CP on 19th (LJM) and 15 at Newbiggin on 5th (STH). Druridge Pools held 30 on 2nd (KWY), 30 were at Budle Bay on 20th (GPK), and 15-24 at Derwent Reservoir and Grindon Lough. Four to seven were also at Gosforth Park NR and Howdon, and one to two at Big Waters, Bothal Pond and Castle Island.

**Mallard** *Anas platyrhynchos*

Larger gatherings included 140 at Big Waters on 28th (GB), 80 on a six km stretch of the Tweed-Whiteadder Water on 23rd (TBr), and 61-65 at Derwent Reservoir (IFo), Gosforth Park NR (NHSN) and Ladyburn Lake (LJM). Groups of 27-32 were at Newsham Pond and QEII CP Lake, and 17-19 at Airy Holm Reservoir, Bothal Pond and the Tweed Estuary. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Castle Island	3	27 (10,10, 7)	STH. Broods of 10 large and 10 very small young on 1st, and new brood of 7 on 24th
Holywell Dene	3	9+	RJP
Killingworth Lake	2	8 (7,1)	LJM. (includes brood of 1 from June?)
Arcot Pond	2	5 (3,2)	STH/LJM. New broods on 3rd and 13th
Bywell bridge	1	8	PCF. On 9th.
Charlton Mires	1	6	MSH. On 13th
Cresswell Pond	1	5	MSH/ADMc. On 15th (as June?)
Dinnington	1	5	PCF. On 18th
Ladyburn Lake	1	5	LJM. New brood on 19th
West Ord	1	5	MHu. On 17th (as June?)
Marden Quarry	1	4	KWY. New brood on 17th
Newsham Pond	1	4	LJM. On 10th
Wansbeck Business Park, Ashington	1	4	LJM. On 28th
St Mary's Wetland	1	3	MSH. On 17th
QEII CP Lake	1	1	LJM. On 18th

**Pintail** *Anas acuta*

A moulting drake at Druridge Pools on 5th (AA) was followed by an intriguingly early juvenile on 10th, which later flew off N (MSH).

**Shoveler** *Anas clypeata*

Three were at Bothal Pond on 31st (TF/JFa).

**Pochard** *Aythya ferina*

Peak site counts were 15 at Holywell Pond on 14th (TRD), ten (including three juveniles) at Bothal Pond on 24th (TD) and five at East Chevington on 31st (TF/JFa). One to two were also at Arcot, Cresswell and Swallow Ponds. Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Holywell Pond	1	3	LJM. Medium-sized young on 31st.

**Tufted Duck** *Aythya fuligula*

Three flew N at Seaton Sluice on 5th (SSWT). Largest counts were 59 at Cresswell Pond on 12th and 19th (LJM), 42 at Bothal Pond on 31st (TF/JFa), 22 at Castle Island on 1st (STH), and 14-19 at Arcot Pond and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. One to three were also at Cocklawburn Pond and Derwent Reservoir. Breeding data were as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Arcot Pond	2	14 (8,6)	STH/GMi et al. Brood of 8 on 24th and new brood of 6 on 26th
Alnwick (River Aln)	2	4 (3,1)	STH. Below Denwick bridge on 8th.
Mootlaw Quarry	1	7	ALT. Fresh brood on 19th.
Howdon Wetland	1+	10	CB. On 4th.
Bothal Pond	1+	8+	STH/IK/ASH. New brood on 22nd. Down to 5 young by 24th
Midde Ord Pond	1	6	MHu
Swallow Pond	1	6	TRD. On 14th.
Wansbeck Business Park, Ashington	1	4	LJM. On 28th.

**Eider** *Somateria mollissima*

105 were off Newbiggin Beacon Point on 17th (STH), 78 at Cocklawburn on 7th (MHu), and 50 at Seaton Sluice on 21st (AJ). Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods/crèches	No. of young	Observer/notes
Holy Island	1	20	IK. Four females + crèche of well-grown young at Sandham Bay on 9th.
Cocklawburn	1	4	MHu. On 12th.

**Common Scoter** *Melanitta nigra*

Good numbers were recorded on passage at Seaton Sluice, with 1,957 N and 391 S in 56 hours between 1st-27th, including 875 N and 40 S on 5th (SSWT). A flock of 120 flew N at Snab Point on 14th (TRD), 98-100 N at Whitley Bay on 23rd (IJ) and Tynemouth on 24th (DRW), and smaller numbers N at these sites, plus Newbiggin on several further dates, while 50 flew S at East Chevington on 25th (TRD). A group of 40 was off East Chevington on 15th (MSH), six to ten at Cocklawburn and Spittal Bay, and one was in the Tyne Estuary on 23rd (DRW).

**Velvet Scoter** *Melanitta fusca*

Singles flew N at Seaton Sluice on 14th (SSWT), Whitley Bay on 23rd (IJ) and Tynemouth on 30th (DRW).

**Goldeneye** *Bucephala clangula*

Three were at Widdrington Moor Lake on 25th (JL).

**Red-breasted Merganser** *Mergus serrator*

Successful breeding was noted as follows:

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Budle Bay	1	7	CGK/GPK. Pair with 7 young on 25th dropping to 6 young by the end of the month.

**Goosander** *Mergus merganser*

Two flew N and eight S at Seaton Sluice between 12th-22nd, including seven S on 17th (SSWT). 182 were counted at the Tweed Estuary on 21st (MHu), about 150 at Holy Island by the end of the month consisted of about 110 in the harbour area plus about 40 off the North Shore, all of which appeared to be full-winged juveniles (IK), and 143 were at Berwick North Shore on 22nd (MHu). Counts of 23-36 came from the Blyth Estuary, Hauxley, New Water Haugh and a six km stretch of the Tweed-Whiteadder Water, and 14-16 at Amble Harbour-Warkworth Gut. Eight were at Stag Rocks, three to four at Alnmouth, Low Newton and Tynemouth, and one to two at Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, Seahouses harbour and Snab Point. Breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Bywell bridge	1	7	EC/JSB. Female plus fully fledged young on 1st.
Wansbeck Estuary	1	6	STH. Female plus half-grown young on 19th.

**Quail** *Coturnix coturnix*

Single calling birds were heard at three locations – Embleton Moor (Christon Bank) on 12th (STH - originally found by Mark Eaton), Lowick on 15th (MJCo) and Mootlaw Quarry (Ryal) on 19th (ALT). One was 'spooked' from a field edge at Mill Farm (Tweedmouth) on 25th (BWG).

**Red Grouse** *Lagopus lagopus*

The only report was a single bird in Harthope Valley on 7th (TRD).



**Grey Partridge** *Perdix perdix*

A party of eight on 9th, comprising an adult and seven young, constitute a rare breeding record for Holy Island (IK). Pairs were at Big Waters NWT and West Ord (Berwick) with a single was heard singing at Linden Hall (Longhorsley).

**Pheasant** *Phasianus colchicus*

A pair were at Old Fisher Lane (Cramlington) on 24th (DM/STH/PJA).

**Red-throated Diver** *Gavia stellata*

Total passage recorded during the month at Seaton Sluice Watch Tower was four N between 1st-8th (SSWT).

**Great Northern Diver** *Gavia immer*

Two were on the sea at the burn mouth at East Chevington on 3rd (TF/JFa) and a single flew N past St. Mary's on 6th (ASJ).

**Fulmar** *Fulmarus glacialis*

The maximum count during the month at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) was ten, including one juvenile (IJ). One to three were at several other coastal localities.

May correction The record of 40 Fulmars for Cresswell Pond for 28th May as this should have read Cullernose Point.

A Fulmar

Tynemouth

Colin Bradshaw

**Manx Shearwater** *Puffinus puffinus*

The monthly total of 366 (308 N and 58 S) past Seaton Sluice was, as last year, well below the average for July. This total included 132 N in three hours on 5th (SSWT). Only single figures were recorded from several other coastal locations.

**Storm Petrel** *Hydrobates pelagicus*

A single bird showed well at Seaton Sluice, feeding low over the sea before moving off N on 12th (SSWT).

**Gannet** *Morus bassanus*

The maximum count at Seaton Sluice was 200 per hour on 14th, with fewer large counts in the second half of the month (SSWT). Ten were at Snab Point (Cresswell) on 14th and one to three were also reported from other coastal locations.

**Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo*

There were no obvious signs of migratory movement at Seaton Sluice during the month with a typical count of 24 N and 14 S recorded in three hours on 5th (SSWT). A total of 53 during a WeBS count at East Chevington on 25th (JL) had increased to 60 on 31st (TF/JFa). 41 were on the River Wansbeck estuary on 26th (LJM) and 30 were on a breakwater at Newbiggin during high tide on 27th (STH). Good numbers also included 24 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 19th (SR) and 22 at the Meadow Haven (Berwick) roost on 31st (MHu). 16 were present during a WeBS count at the River Tweed estuary on 21st (MHu). One to ten birds were at various other locations including at least two immature "continental" *sinensis* race birds at the River Blyth estuary on 28th (MSH).

**Shag** *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

400 were seen during a visit to the Farne Islands on 2nd (TRD). The Meadow Haven (Berwick) roost peaked at 36 on 31st and 14 were found during a WeBS count at Berwick North Shore on 22nd (MHu). Two nests with young were at Dunstanburgh on 3rd (KWY).

**Bittern** *Botaurus stellaris*

The first returning bird was seen at Gosforth Park NR on 7th and then remained, but proved elusive, thereafter (NHSN).

**Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta*

Up to ten birds were present in the River Wansbeck/Castle Island area towards the end of the month (LJM/GB/TB) including a ringed bird – yellow H on right and red J on left – confirmed by the BTO as ringed as a nestling at North Cotes, Lincolnshire in 2015 (TRD). Budle Bay was also a popular location with a maximum count of seven there on 29th (CGK/GPK). Elsewhere, one to three were at Cresswell Pond NWT, Druridge Pools, Lindisfarne NNR and Warkworth Gut.

**Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea*

Along the south bank of the River Wansbeck, near the Castle Island area, 15 were in trees with Little Egrets on the 26th (LJM). Howden peaked at 14 on 24th (CB) and 11 were present during a WeBS visit to the River Tweed estuary on 21st (MHu). Nine were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 19th (SR) and seven were at Druridge Pools on 2nd (PCF). One to five were at many other typical locations.

**Little Grebe** *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Peak counts were as follows:

Locality	Peak Count	Date	Observer/notes
Holywell Pond	13	11th	Ten Adults (LJM/ASJ)
Gosforth Park NR	10	All month	(NHSN)
Bothal Pond (Coney Garth)	10	24th	Five adults, three juv, two young (TD/TF/JFa)
Airy Holm Reservoir	7	26th	(IFo)
Banks Pond (Dinnington)	4	13th	A pair and two juv (PCF)
Castron	4	23rd	(JD)
Shield on the Wall	4	25th	(MRS)

In addition, two broods of three young each were at Arcot Pond on 30th and two broods, with three young, were also at Druridge Pools on 19th. Four were at Castle Island during a WeBS count on 24th (DM/STH/PJA) and one well grown youngster was at Blyth GC on 10th (LJM).

**Great Crested Grebe** *Podiceps Cristatus*

One N on 20th was the only recorded passage (SSWT). East Chevington again proved a popular location, peaking at seven on 25th including two juveniles (TRD), with a further report of three very small young on 24th (IK/ASH) whilst Killingworth Lake also had a maximum of seven on 6th, comprising one pair with three young and a second pair with one surviving young from four hatched (ASJ). Four – one pair with two juveniles – were at Druridge Pools mid-month (PCF/LJM) although unfortunately the four adults present at Derwent Reservoir all month seem to have failed in any breeding attempts this year (IFo). Breeding success was reported from Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) with a pair raising one juvenile (TF/JFa) and notably a pair with one juvenile at Castron on 23rd, a site where this species has only just recently started breeding (JD). One to three were at several other typical localities.

Two images of one of our most  
photogenic species  
by Mike Potts.

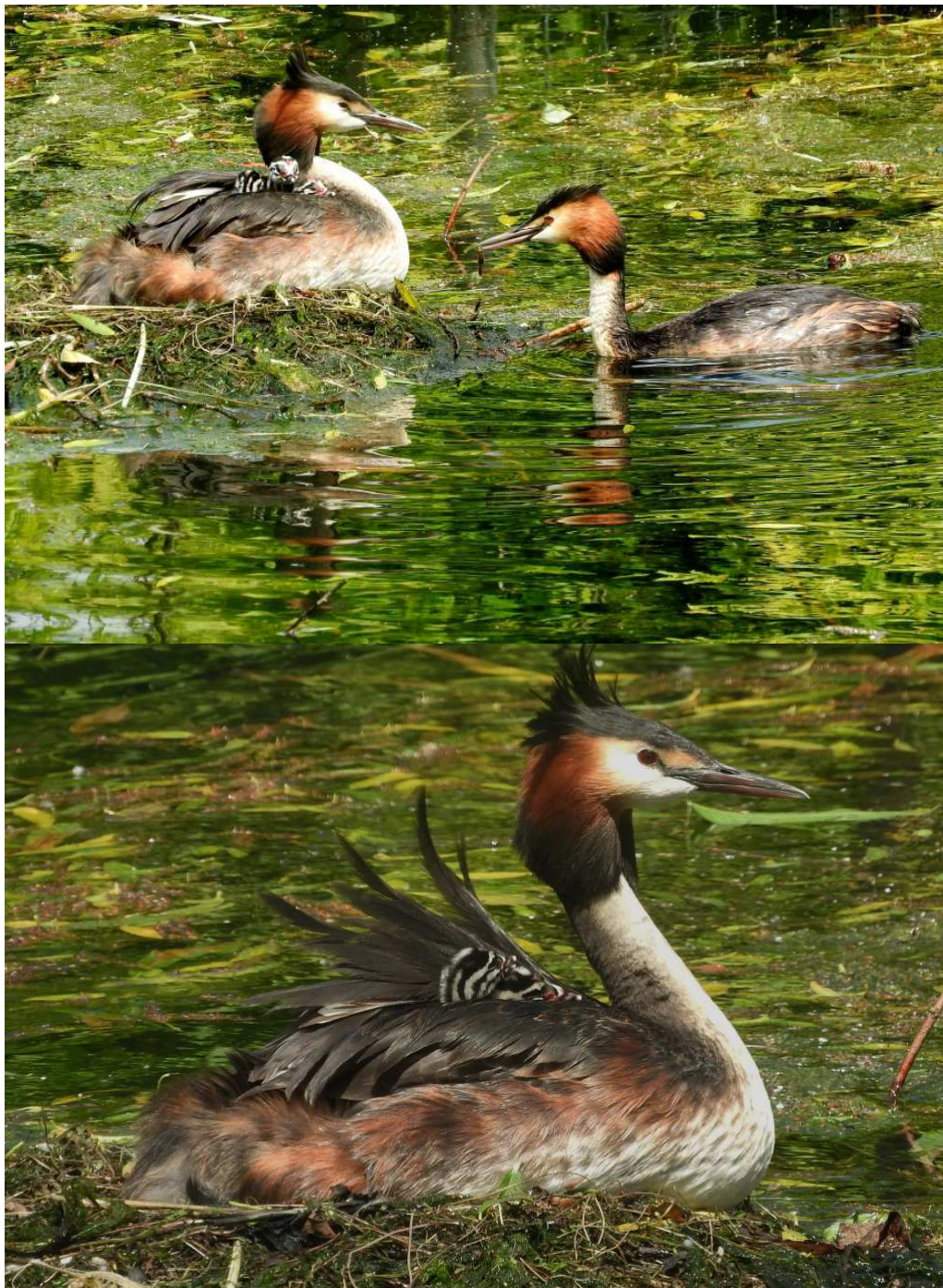
A Pair of Great-crested Grebes  
with young at Killingworth Lake  
8th July

**Black-necked Grebe** *Podiceps nigrocollis*

A pair were at a site in the south  
east of the county.

**Red Kite** *Milvus Milvus*

A pair successfully fledged two  
young in the Tyne Valley, the first  
known breeding in the County  
since 2010 (IK). A single bird at  
Derwent Reservoir on 31st was  
the only other sighting (IFo).





**Marsh Harrier** *Circus aeruginosus*

All four young from the regular breeding site were noted flying over the pool and surrounding fields on 24th (IK/ASH), and a male was noted at Druridge Pools on 17th (TF/JFa) and at East Chevington on 25th (TRD). A juvenile was at Holy Island on 31st (SR/AH).

**Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter nisus*

Single birds were seen this month at Arcot Pond, Ashington, Cramlington, Druridge Lane, Ellington, Holywell Dene, Jesmond Dene and Kenton (Newcastle).

**Common Buzzard** *Buteo buteo*

A pair plus three fledged young were at Simonside on 10th (ASJ) and a pair with two fledged young was around Stamfordham from 27th until the Month end (EC). Three birds were noted at Ryal on 24th (PCF) and two birds were at Cawledge (Alnwick) on 5th (JMA) and at Plessey Hall Farm (Cramlington) on 24th (DM/STH/PJA/GM). Single birds were recorded at Ashington, Blackhall Mill, Bothal Pond, Corbridge, Ellington, Hartford Bank, Longhoughton, Morpeth, Prestwick Carr and Wooler.

**Osprey** *Pandion haliaetuss*

Birds were at Budle Bay on 18th (GPK) and Derwent Reservoir on 27th and 28th (IFo).

**Water Rail** *Rallus aquaticus*

Two birds plus two young chicks possibly a second brood were seen towards the end of the month at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN). Cresswell Pond had an adult and a juvenile seen on several dates (TRD et al) and one was heard at East Chevington on 14th (TRD).

**Moorhen** *Gallinula chloropus*

Seven birds were at Leazes Park (Newcastle) on 25th (DM), six were at Arcot Pond on 24th (DM) and five were at Blyth GC pond on 10th (LJM) and Castle Island on 24th (DM/PJS/STH) and four were at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 19th (DM). A brood of two young were at QEII CP on 18th (LJM). Single birds were reported at Lower Ouseburn (Byker) on 7th (DM) and at Fisherman's Lodge (Jesmond Dene) on 12th (MJCo).

**Coot** *Fulica atra*

Bothal Pond had a count of 50 on 3rd (TD) rising to 101 on 22nd (STH). Other double counts of 24 were seen at Arcot Pond on 24th (DM/PJA/STH), 18 at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 27th (DM), and 14 at Big Waters NWT on 3rd (GB) and at Killingworth Lake and 10 at Leazes Park (Newcastle) on 25th (DM). Two – eight birds were at Castle Island, Cresswell Pond and at Howdon.

**Avocet** *Recurvirostra avosetta*

With the exception of two records, all others came from Cresswell Pond, where two broods were noted: one with two young on 12th and a further three young on 19th (LJM), while on 20th an adult with four young was reported (TB). Earlier in the month, on 5th, three adults were reported with two apparently sitting on nests (AA) and a pair were incubating on 15th (MSH). There was a report on 31st, again from Cresswell Pond, of a colour ringed birds (TF/JFa). Elsewhere, five birds were seen at Low Newton on 23rd (ASJ) and an adult (again ringed) was seen at another site in the south east on 29th with two juveniles (TRD).



An Avocet prowls the shallows at Cresswell Pond by Colin Bradshaw

**Oystercatcher** *Haematopus ostralegus*

Significant movement was in evidence from 20th-22nd, when 172 birds were seen flying south at Seaton Sluice (SSWT). 112 birds were reported from Budle Bay on 31st (CGK/GPK) and 62 were seen at Newbiggin, Beacon Point on both the 15th and 29th (STH). On 27th a sighting of 49 birds came from North Blyth staithe and on 29th, 50+ birds were reported from Amble Harbour (MSH). The only significant count from inland was from Derwent Reservoir, where 48 adults were recorded on 23rd (IFo). Further counts of 20 or more were made at Budle Bay on 15th (CGK/GPK), Tweed Estuary on 21st (MHu) and Berwick North Shore on 22nd (MHu). Counts of less than 20 came from Big Waters NWT, Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), Cullercoats, Prestwick Carr, Chibburn Farm at Widdrington (where a pair with one small chick was seen crossing the road!) and Whitley Bay, Rockcliffe.

**Golden Plover** *Pluvialis apricaria*

Post-breeding flocks at coastal locations were much in evidence by mid-month. The largest count was of 500 "Northern" race birds at Holy Is. on 17th (IK). A count of 142 at St Mary's on 11th had grown to 350+ by 26th (ASJ). Similarly, Newbiggin, Beacon Point saw a build-up from 161 on 12th, to 209 on 15th and then 318 on 17th (STH). Seaton Sluice Watch Tower recorded 200 birds on the nearby rocks on 15th while Cullercoats reported a build-up from 16 on 12th, to 46 birds on 19th and then 100 birds on 27th (IJ). Counts of 36 and less came from Backworth (where 22 first returners arrived on 3rd - 16 days earlier than last year, CGK), Cresswell Pond and Whitley Bay, Rockcliffe. The only inland report came from Derwent Reservoir where 18 birds were reported up to 28th (IFo).

**Grey Plover** *Pluvialis squatarola*

There was only one record submitted: Blyth Estuary on 29th, where a single bird in full breeding plumage was seen (AJ).

**Lapwing** *Vanellus vanellus*

Reports of breeding came from some inland sites: Derwent Reservoir had a report of 162, including juveniles on 7th (ASJ) and Charlton Mires (north of Alnwick) on 13th reported a recently-hatched brood of two (MSH). Further toward the coast, up to 5 adults with three chicks were seen at Howdon (a first recorded breeding success at this site) from 3rd-24th (CB). At the coast, six pairs with two young were noted at St. Mary's on 7th. The largest count of the month came from Derwent Reservoir, where 800 birds were counted on 23rd (IFo). A count of 300+ was made at Monk's House Pool on 13th (MSH) and 150+ birds were present at Charlton Mires flash (north of Alnwick) on 13th (MSH). Elswick Wharf and Newcastle Business Park saw 142 on 22nd and Castron had 135 birds on 23rd. Cresswell Pond held 130+ on 7th (MSH) with a similar number at Blagdon, Bellasis Bridge on 9th (STH). Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) saw an increase from 37 on 3rd (TD) to 128 on 24th (TF/JFa). Further counts of 10-86 were made at Castle Island, Cocklawburn, Gosforth Park NR, Stocksfield (Merryshield Farm) and Tweed Estuary. Counts of less than ten came from Ashington, Prestwick Carr and Tweed Estuary.

**Little Ringed Plover** *Charadrius dubius*

Evidence of breeding came from two inland sites, one of which reported the possibility of four broods on 19th (ALT). The other site recorded 11 adults on 7th (ASJ) with another report from the same site and for much of the month suggesting two pairs had reared three young but with another pair spoiled by Greylag Geese trampling over the nesting area (IFo). Other evidence of breeding came from nearer the coast where two juveniles were seen on 1st (STH) and another juvenile was seen on 25th/26th on the coast (TRD, MSH). Further reports (none with mention of breeding evidence) came from a variety of sites.

**Ringed Plover** *Charadrius hiaticula*

There were only two records submitted that involved breeding: three juveniles were recorded at Blagdon, Brenkley on 17th (PCF) and out of potentially three to four pairs through much of the month only one young was noted at Derwent Reservoir (IFo). The highest count of 20 came from the Blyth Estuary on 27th (STH). All other reports involved three or fewer birds and came from a variety of sites.

**Whimbrel** *Numenius phaeopus*

From 20th- 22nd 136 birds were counted flying N and 82 S from Seaton Sluice (SSWT). The Tweed estuary saw 24 birds stop off on 4th (MHu), while at nearby East Ord a further 12 were noted flying S on the same day at dusk (MHu). The only other double figure counts were eleven birds at Boulmer on 28th (TBr) and a flock of ten on the rocks at St. Mary's (JBu). Other sightings, of seven or fewer birds came from: Budle Bay; Alnmouth Station; Cocklawburn; Cresswell Pond; Cresswell (Snab Point); Druridge Pools; Howdon; Low Newton; Newbiggin; Blyth estuary; Tynemouth and Whitley Bay (Rockcliffe).

**Curlew** *Numenius arquata*

The largest count of 144 came from the Tweed estuary during a WeBS count on 21st (MHu). The maximum count of birds moving off Seaton Sluice was 60 flying N on 5th with a total count for the month of 97 north and 24 S (SSWT). Counts at Cresswell Pond varied between 70 and 90 on 30th and 31st (TF/JFa, IRD, GB), an increase over the 25 birds reported from there on 10th (AJ). A summering group of 60 was seen at Castron on 23rd (JD) and 55 were on the Blyth estuary on 28th (MSH), an increase on the 36 seen on 18th (AJ). Beacon Point at Newbiggin recorded 52 birds all in heavy wing moult on 12th (STH). Between 8-44 birds were at Howdon between 13th-17th, an increase on the four noted on 4th (CB). Berwick saw an increase from six on 4th, seen in the estuary, to 16 seen on the North Shore on 4th (MHu). Other records of two or less birds came from: Elswick Wharf; Cramlington (Plessey Hall Farm and Shotton Opencast - in both cases, two young were noted); Cullercoats; Wansbeck estuary and Whitley Bay (Rockcliffe).



**Black-tailed Godwit** *Limosa limosa*

From 6th-27th, 71 birds were recorded flying S at Seaton Sluice (SSWT). Cresswell Pond had records throughout the month with the biggest count on 5th when 45 birds were seen (AA,EC/JSB). Numbers of birds noted at Cresswell Pond were in breeding plumage and a record from 17th was of a colour ringed bird (TF/JFa). Other locations reporting Black-tailed Godwit were: Castle Island - 24 on 30th (GB); Low Newton Scrape - 21 on 29th (MSH); Druridge Pools - 20 on 2nd and 25th (NFO, TRD) and 15 on 17th (TF/JFa). At various times throughout the month these sites also recorded smaller numbers. Further sites with fewer than five birds reported were: Berwick (Little Beach); Budle Bay; Cocklawburn; Foxton (R. Aln); Tweed estuary; Whitley Bay (Rockcliffe) and Wallsend (Rising Sun CP).

**Bar-tailed Godwit** *Limosa lapponica*

Holy Island (St. Cuthbert's Is.) reported 160 birds on 9th, four of which were breeding plumaged birds and the rest summering birds in winter plumage (IK). Four north-bound birds were seen off Seaton Sluice on 5th (SSWT). Only four records, each of singles came from: Berwick, North Shore; Cresswell Pond and Cresswell (Snab Point).

**Turnstone** *Arenaria interpres*

A total of 43 flew S off Seaton Sluice Watch Tower during 21st to 24th. On 27th 28 were roosting on North Blyth staithe and 11 noted at Newbiggin (both STH) and 19 were at Tynemouth on 31st. Also in the last third two to five were at Berwick, Craster Harbour, R Blyth estuary and Whitley Bay. Earlier, it was first seen at Seaton Sluice on 5th and five were at St Mary's on 6th.

**Knot** *Calidris canutus*

In Budle Bay 53 were present on 20th (GPK), including some first summers, 46 were at Newbiggin on 29th (up from 33 on 27th), 36 flew S at Seaton Sluice on 20th and 32 were at Stag Rocks on 23rd. Seven or fewer were found at another six typical coastal locations and one lingered at Cresswell Pond from 25th to 31st.

**Ruff** *Calidris pugnax*

Two were at Druridge Pools on 6th (TBr) and another two were present there on 31st (TF/JFa). One to two appeared at Cresswell Pond during 24th to 31st (IK/MSH *et al*).

**Curlew Sandpiper** *Calidris ferruginea*

An adult was at Cresswell Pond from 25th to 27th (TRD *et al*) and a juvenile at Berwick, Little Beach on 30th (TBr).

**Temminck's Stint** *Calidris temminckii*

One was at Low Newton scrape on 12th (STH). The observer reports that it was present the previous day, finder unknown at present.

**Sanderling** *Calidris alba*

At Seaton Sluice Watch Tower the first returns were seen on 20th and a total of 222 logged, 16 N and 206 S with a maximum of 93 S on 23rd. At Newbiggin, Beacon Point 69 were present on 27th (STH). Four were at St Mary's on 6th, 14 at East Chevington on 15th and 15 at Snab Point on 20th.

**Dunlin** *Calidris alpina*

Passage migrants in the last third included 90 in Budle Bay on 22nd (GPK), 100 in River Coquet estuary/Amble Harbour on 25th and 29th (TRD/MSH) and the Cresswell Pond area held up to 91 in this period (IRD *et al*). Elsewhere along the coast 16 were at Berwick on 22nd and 11 at Castle Island on 29th whilst earlier reports were scarce with ten at Boulmer on 4th, four at Cresswell on 14th and one at Seahouses Harbour on 2nd. The only inland sightings came from Derwent Reservoir: one on 7th and three on 24th.

A Dunlin at Cresswell Pond

Colin Bradshaw

**Purple Sandpiper** *Calidris maritima*

No reports were received.

**Pectoral Sandpiper** *Calidris melanotos*

An adult was found at Low Newton scrape on 26th (TRD *et al*).

**Common Sandpiper** *Actitis hypoleucos*

At Derwent Reservoir 16 were counted on 7th (ASJ) and 11 adults were present on 25th (IFo). Passage was said to be good in Budle Bay, and earlier than usual, with a peak of 12 on 18th (CGK/GPK). The most at Castle Island were nine on 18th (STH) and seven on 30th (GB), eight were still on territory in Upper Coquetdale on 10th (ASJ) and a total of seven flew S at Seaton Sluice. Six to seven were noted occasionally at Holywell Pond, St Mary's, Whitley Bay and Tynemouth and regularly up to three at Cresswell Pond and also five there on 28th. Up to four were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs, Ashington and Foxton and one to two at a further 16 widespread locations.

**Green Sandpiper** *Tringa ochropus*

The first migrants were one at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 4th (SR) and two at Cresswell Pond on 12th (LJM). From 15th singles appeared irregularly at Bothal Pond, Budle Bay, Cocklawburn pond, Gosforth Park NR, Holy Island, R Wansbeck at Ashington and also two at Castle Island on 24th (DM) and three at Charlton Mires on 31st (SR/AH).

**Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia*

A total of 11 was found at Holy Island on 31st (SR/AH), including seven by Causeway bridge and five were on Druridge Pools also on 31st (TF/JFa). Singles were at Derwent Reservoir on 7th, 19th and from 23rd to 31st and at Cresswell Pond 25th to 28th with probably another on 31st. All other reports also involved singles, on one day, at ten other widespread localities.

**Wood Sandpiper** *Tringa glareola*

Singles were found at Low Newton scrape on 16th (CGK/GPK), at Cresswell Pond on 26th (MSH) and an adult was at Derwent Reservoir on 30th to 31st (IFo).

**Redshank** *Tringa totanus*

Seaton Sluice Watch Tower reported 55 S during 22nd to 24th, the first indication of passage there. The maximum in Budle Bay was 310 on 20th (CGK/GPK). The roost at North Blyth staithes held 280 on 27th (STH) and 140 were noted in R Blyth estuary on 30th (GB); 80+ were in Amble Harbour on 29th. Elsewhere 18-50 appeared at Berwick, Boulmer, Castle Island, Howdon, Newbiggin and R Tweed estuary and smaller numbers visited six other places at or near the coast.,

**Woodcock** *Scolopax rusticola*

No reports were received.

**Snipe** *Gallinago gallinago*

Relatively few records were received: one to two at Howdon on 17th/20th, three at Backworth Pond on 20th, three at Bothal Pond on 24th, five to six at Cresswell Pond and Druridge Pools in the last week and a peak of eight at Hoppen Kiln Flash on 31st.

**Pomarine Skua** *Stercorarius pomarinus*

An adult 'with full tail spoons' flew N at Tynemouth pier at 08:30 on 9th (DRW).

**Arctic Skua** *Stercorarius parasiticus*

A total of seven was logged at Seaton Sluice Watch Tower, five N and three S on three (unspecified) days up to 27th. At St Mary's two pale phase morphs on the sea later flew N on 20th (JBU) and two moved N off Tynemouth on 31st (DRW). Singletons were off Tynemouth on 5th, Whitley Bay on 20th and East Chevington on 31st.

**Great Skua** *Stercorarius skua*

One flew N at Whitley Bay, Rockcliffe on 11th (IJ)

**Auk** *sp*

Few records from Seaton Sluice after 13th with a maximum movement N of 110 in 1.5 hours on that day. The first juveniles were noted on the sea on 20th (SSWT).

**Puffin** *Fratercula arctica*

A movement of 26N and 42S was recorded on 5th at Seaton Sluice but there were few records after that date (SSWT). A handful of birds were noted moving N or S on 9th at Tynemouth (DRW) and a single was at Dunstanburgh on 3rd (KWY).

**Razorbill** *Alca torda*

All records came from the first week, comprising 90 at Dunstanburgh, mainly on the cliffs (KWY), 20 on the Farne Islands (TRD), 11 at Tynemouth (SPP) and eight at Berwick, Spital Bay (MHu).

**Guillemot** *Uria aalge*

An estimated ca.5,000 were on the Farne Islands on 2nd (TRD) and 84 at Berwick, Spital Bay on 4th (MHu) but elsewhere, only one to two were seen at five sites, including two juveniles at Newbiggin on 25th (TRD).





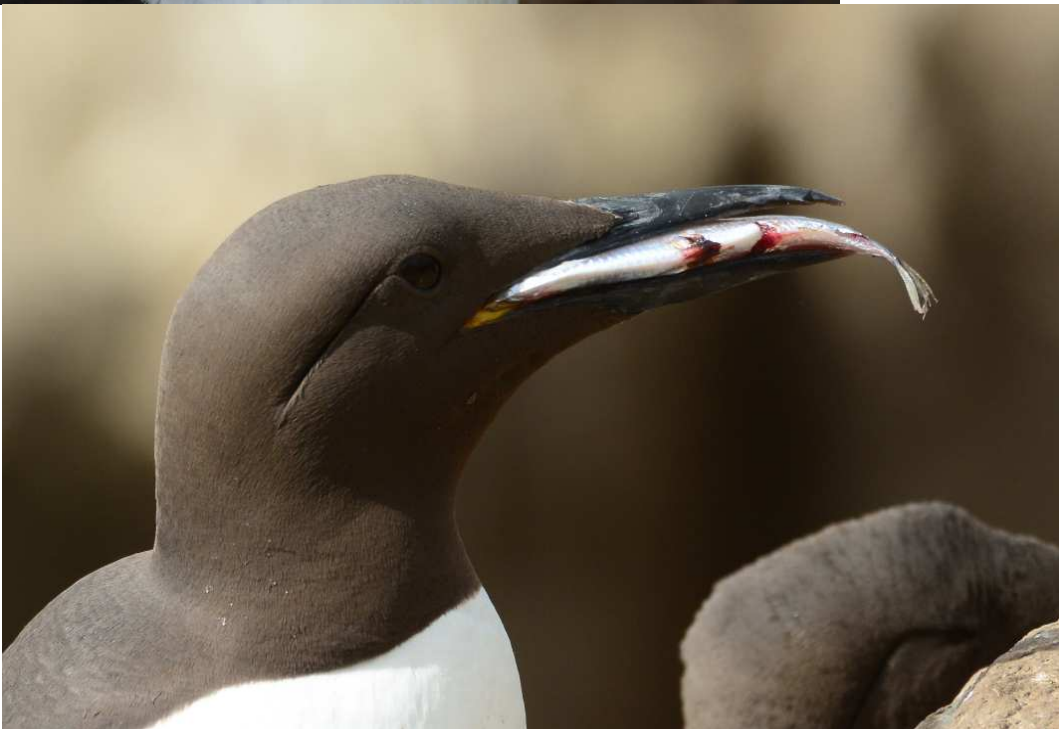
Three auks from The Farne Islands

3rd July by Tim Dean

top – a classic Puffin with a Sand Eel

Middle – a Guillemot

and bottom a Razorbill



**Little Tern** *Sternula albifrons*

Six moved past Seaton Sluice from 20th-23rd (SSWT) but sightings came from only four other sites, seven at Budle Bay, four at East Chevington burn mouth, two at Druridge Pools and a single at Cresswell Pond.



Little Terns at Druridge Ponds by John Clark on 7th July

**Sandwich Tern** *Sterna sandvicensis*

260 flew S past Seaton Sluice in one hour on 8th (SSWT) and maximum gatherings of 110-180 were present at Cocklawburn Beach (MHU), Newbiggin (STH), the Tweed Estuary (MHU) and Tynemouth (ASJ). Smaller numbers of 30-50 were at East Chevington, the Farne Islands, Howdon and St Mary's Island, 10-20 at Berwick (North Shore), Newbiggin (Beacon Point) and the River Tweed Estuary with two to three at Cresswell (Snab Point) and on the River Tyne at the Quayside. Two interesting marked birds seen at Newbiggin comprised one ringed in 2010 at Sands of Forvie, Scotland (STH) and another, ringed as a juvenile on the Ythan Estuary, NE Scotland in 2010, previously seen in Namibia on three dates in 2012 and 2014 (STH).

**Common Tern** *Sterna hirundo*

Breeding records from Whittle Dene Reservoirs included at least six broods of 15 young some of which were fully fledged by 1st; however, fatalities occurred as young flying from the raft landed on the water and drowned, being unable to regain access onto the vertically-sided raft (SR/EC). At Gosforth Park NR around eight pairs fledged 13 young (NHSN) and at Big Waters one pair raised one young (GB) but a pair at Holywell Pond had the nest predated (MSH).

The largest counts included 210 moving S at Seaton Sluice on 23rd (SSWT) and on 11th and 24th, 80 and 200 were counted S at Whitley Bay (IJ) whilst 60, 140 and 190 were at East Chevington Pool/beach on 14th, 25th and 28th (TRD); the Black Middens rocks in the Tyne Estuary held a total of 150 'Commic' Terns on 26th (JMA). At Newbiggin, Beacon Point, 23 included three juveniles on 15th (STH) and counts of one to five came from twelve other coastal and inland localities.

**Roseate Tern** *Sterna dougallii*

A total of 15 moved past Seaton Sluice from 14th-23rd, the majority S, with eight recorded on 23rd (SSWT). Gatherings of nine adults and three juveniles were at Newbiggin, Beacon Point on 29th (STH), five at Chevington burn mouth on 3rd (IK) but elsewhere all other records were of one to three, including juveniles, at five other sites, Budle Point, Druridge Pools, the River Wansbeck Estuary, St Mary's Island and Tynemouth (GPK/TF/JFa/JBu/SPP/DRW).

**Arctic Tern** *Sterna paradisaea*

An estimated ca.2,000 were counted on the Farne Islands on 2nd (TRD). Away from the breeding colonies, a maximum of 32 moved S at Seaton Sluice on 22nd, noted here as 'in far fewer numbers than Common Tern' (SSWT) and 50 flew S at Whitley Bay on 22nd (IJ). In the River Tweed Estuary, 18 were in the gull roost on 20th (MHU), ten frequented East Chevington on 25th (TRD) with one to two elsewhere at Budle Point, Low Newton and North Shields Fish Quay.





Two Arctic Tern chicks from the Farne Islands  
3rd July by Tim DFeen



**Kittiwake** *Rissa tridactyla*

The maximum recorded passage movements noted at Seaton Sluice were 330 S in two hours on 20th and 320 N in three hours on 5th (SSWT); light passage N was also noted on the latter date at Newbiggin (STH). A count of ca.2,000 came from the Farne Islands on 2nd (TRD) and breeding elsewhere were 300+ adults with 72 chicks on the cliffs at Tynemouth Priory (SPP) and a new colonisation in the Newcastle City Centre was recorded on 14th when eight nests were found on the Red House at the Quayside.(DM). Concentrations of 280 and 340 were in the River Tweed Estuary on 10th and 21st (MHu) plus 23 at Berwick, North Shore on 22nd (MHu).

**Bonaparte's Gull** *Chroicocephalus philadelphia*

This rare visitor, a 1st-summer bird, continued to find conditions to it's liking in the Wansbeck Estuary and on Castle Island where it was recorded almost daily, throughout the month (and into August)(DM/STH/TRD/Birdguides).

**Black-headed Gull** *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

Gatherings of 647 were at Howdon on 24th, all except one being adult birds including an albino (CB), 457, including only four juveniles, in the River Blyth Estuary on the same day (LJM), 336 in the River Tweed Estuary on 21st (MHu) and 200 at Boulmer on 5th (JMA). Smaller flocks of 100-200 were at Castle Island (DM *et al*) and Berwick, West Ord (MHu) with 10-60 at Berwick (North Shore and Pier), Exhibition Park, Hethpool, Jesmond Dene, Kirkheaton, Leazes Park, Old Lavering, St Mary's Island and Wetland. Two pairs bred at Big Waters with one and two young, still not fledged by 28th (GB).

**Little Gull** *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

Very few records with singles at two sites, an adult moving S at Seaton Sluice (SSWT) and at Cresswell Pond on 12th and 15th (MSH).

**Mediterranean Gull** *Larus melanocephalus*

The usual summer influx was particularly noticeable this year with almost 40 records received. During the first half of the month around ten birds were present at Budle Bay (CGK) and elsewhere one to five were recorded by many observers at around ten mainly coastal localities between Howdon and Cresswell Pond, but the numbers increased considerably thereafter with maxima up to 61 on Newbiggin beach on 26th (LJM/JBu/STH), 60 near Bell's Farm, Cresswell on 28th (MSH) and 41 on farmland at Druridge on 17th (MSH/TRD); adult birds predominated in these large gatherings and many immatures were also present. A colour-ringed 1st-summer bird, marked as a nestling on Coquet Island in June 2015 was seen at Cresswell Pond on 12th having been recorded at Preston Docks, Lancashire in February this year and then at the RSPB Reserve at Saltholme in June (MSH).



A Mediterranean Gull  
Newbiggin  
Colin Bradshaw

**Common Gull** *Larus canus*

A small influx at the end of the month heralded the start of the late summer return from the northern breeding areas. On 30th-31st, flocks of 50-150 were at Berwick (West Ord), Budle Bay and Kirkheaton (JMA/CGK/MHu) with very few recorded elsewhere prior to that date.

**Lesser Black-backed Gull** *Larus fuscus graelsii*

Ten juveniles were present at the Blyth, Wimbourn Quay colony on 24th (LJM) and elsewhere one to seven were at Arcot Pond, Castle Island, Cramlington, Jesmond Dene, Leazes Park and the River Tweed Estuary (DM/MHu/MJCo/PCF) with small numbers recorded daily at Seaton Sluice, mainly moving S with a maximum of five on 22nd (SSWT).

**Herring Gull** *Larus argentatus argenteus*

A large flock of 710 gathered in the River Tweed Estuary on 21st where 300 were also recorded on 11th (MHu/JMA). At the Black Middens, 100 were present on 26th, 72 at Berwick North Shore on 22nd with a maximum of 50 at the NS Fish Quay on 26th, 30 at St Mary's Island and 23 at Castle Island (DM); one to five were at three other localities. At the Blyth Riverside Estate, 29 juveniles were counted during the last week of the month, making a total of 86 for the year (LJM) and other successful breeding records comprised four broods of one-two at North Blyth Staithes (STH) and a single juvenile at Bates Staithes, Blyth (LJM). Four colour-ringed birds were noted at Amble Harbour and the Long Nanny, all of which were marked either locally or at a York Waste Disposal Site (MSH/STH).

**Great Black-backed Gull** *Larus marinus*

Three records only, comprising seven at two sites in the Berwick area (MHu) and a single 1st-summer at the Long Nanny, marked as a *pullus* on the Isle of May in June 2015 (MSH).

**Stock Dove** *Columba oenas*

A flock of around 40 was on rough farmland at Stamfordham on 22nd (EC), four at Jesmond Dene on 3rd, Cresswell Pond on 14th, Tynemouth on 15th and Grindon Lough on 25th (MJCo/TRD/CB/MRS). Two to three were in Holywell Dene and an Old Hartley garden during the month with three at Ellington on 9th (RJP/TB).

**Woodpigeon** *Columba palumbus*

At Holywell 10-15 gathered with two to seven in an Old Hartley garden during the month (RJP) and seven at Jesmond Dene on 31st (MJCo). One unusually flew in off the sea at Seaton Sluice on 14th with 26 noted doing the same at Flamborough Head on the same day (SSWT).

**Collared Dove** *Streptopelia decaocto*

Five the high count at Beaconhill (Cramlington) on 15th, four (2ad,2juv) at Dinnington on 4th and two at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 9th (PCF) with one in a Old Hartley garden on 28th a rare visitor (RJP).

**Cuckoo** *Cuculus canorus*

All singles with one at Widehope on 1st and Thrunton Woods on 1st (TRD/JD/IRD), Cambois (railway line) on 13th (STH) and Berwick GC on the same day (BWG). Juveniles were noted at Castron on 23rd (JD), in off at Tynemouth on 25th (SPP), at Newton Point on 26th (TRD), Big Waters on 28th (SPP) and flying S at Snab Point (Cresswell) on 31st (JL) with one at Holy Island on the same date (SR/AH).



A juvenile Cuckoo on the rocks at Newton Point on 26th July by Tim Dean



**Barn Owl** *Tyto alba*

One at Rothbury on 1st and 8th (TRD/JD), west of B6318 at Rudchester on 9th (SR), at Cresswell Pond on 12th/13th, Bothal Pond on 15th (TB) and Boulmer Ops site on 21st (AJ). One with grey rather than golden back and wings was noted carrying prey to a nest at Bothal Pond on 24th (TD/IK/ASH).

**Little Owl** *Athene noctua*

Seen on 25th, 28th and 30th at Derwent Reservoir (IFo) and on a cottage rooftop at Druridge Pools on 28th (TRD). A minimum of four territories were found in North Tyneside (CGK/AC *et al*)

**Tawny Owl** *Strix aluco*

Two calling at central Alnwick on 27th (JMA) one at Dinnington on 16th (PCF) and seen in daylight at Glororum (Morpeth) on 30th (PCF).

**Short-eared Owl** *Asio flammeus*

An unusual record of one moving south over the sea being mobbed by Sandwich Terns at Seaton Sluice on 1st (SSWT).

**Nightjar** *Caprimulgus europaeus*

Two males began churring at 21.55 at Winnow Hill (Slaley) on 19th giving good views from 22.00-22.45h (AJ).

**Swift** *Apus apus*

Large counts of 200 at Ellington on 25th, 150 at St Mary's Island on 11th, 100+ at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 12th with 55 at Hillheads (Whitley Bay) on 28th (TB/ASJ). 40-53 gathered over the Tweed at West Ord (Berwick) on 3rd, Chugdon Wood and Spittal (Berwick) on 17th and over Gosforth Park NR during the month, Haltwhistle on 22nd, Warren Mill (Bamburgh) on 23rd and Cullercoats on 28th. One to 15 were at eight other locations with limited movement south noted at Seaton Sluice watch tower the peak being 42 on 13th.

**Kingfisher** *Alcedo atthis*

Two at Whiteadder Point (Berwick) on 22nd (TBr) with singles at Swallow Pond on 7th (SPP), Bywell Bridge on 9th (PCF), the waterfall Jesmond Dene on 12th (MJCo), Budle Bay on 30th (GPK) and Gosforth Park NR (NHSN).

**Green Woodpecker** *Picus viridis*

An adult with two juveniles was at Netherwitton on 8th with one occasionally seen and heard at Craggside (Rothbury) during the month (TRD/JD) and one at Gosforth Park NR.

**Great Spotted Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos major*

A family male, female and juvenile were in Holywell Dene and an Old Hartley garden on numerous days costing the observer heavily in peanuts (RJP). Two were at Chugden Wood (Ellington) on 10th (TB) and on feeders at Holywell Pond on 31st (LJM). Juveniles were noted at Dinnington and Leazes Park with singles at a further seven widespread localities.

**Kestrel** *Falco tinnunculus*

Three pairs successfully bred in the Spindlestone – Budle Bay area (GPK). Three birds were observed at Knotts Flats (North Shields) on 4th (JMA). Two birds were on Holy Island on 4th (ADM). On 3rd a single bird was nr Blanchland (JMA) and the only other records involving single birds were noted at eight sites during the month by one observer (TB) including a bird being mobbed by Swallows *Hirundo rustica* whilst it was mobbing a Buzzard *Buteo buteo* at Longhoughton on 26th.

A Kestrel rests

Druridge Bay

Colin Bradshaw

**Hobby** *Falco subbuteo*

On 6th a first year bird passed through East Chevington (TBr) and a bird flew N over the dunes at Cresswell Pond on 17th (TF/JFa). On 21st a 1st summer bird was watched dragonflies over Holywell Pond and even landed on the hide with a dragonfly in its talons (SPP).

**Peregrine** *Falco peregrinus*

Two adults noted on 16 days this month in Budle Bay (CGK/GPK) were the only sightings this month.



**Magpie** *Pica pica*

Counts of seven at Jesmond Dene on 19th (MJCo), six at Gosforth Park NR during the month (NHSN) and five at St Mary's Wetland on 6th (JMA) with one to two at Holywell Dene and in an Old Hartley garden (RJP).

**Jay** *Garrulus glandarius*

An adult and three juveniles were at Ellington on 27th with two there on 9th (TB). Other reports were singles at ten other locations.

**Jackdaw** *Corvus monedula*

High counts of 88 at Howdon on 13th (CB), 51 at Beacon Hill (Cramlington) on 24th (DM) and ten in an Old Hartley garden on 1st (RJP) with three at Paddy Freemans Lake (Jesmond Dene) on 19th (MJCo).

**Rook** *Corvus frugilegus*

Just two reports both from Holywell Dene with a peak of ten during the month and one in an Old Hartley garden on 11th .

**Carrion Crow** *Corvus corone*

A peak count of 50 at North Shields Fish Quay on 4th, ten at Boulmer on 5th (JMA) and six at Jesmond Dene on 19th .

**Raven** *Corvus corax*

Two were at Usway Burn (Upper Coquetdale) on 3rd (IRD).

**Goldcrest** *Regulus regulus*

Family parties of six at Morpeth on 13th (TB) and 3+ at Prestwick Carr on 27th (PCF), two in Jesmond Dene on 12th and singles at Dam Dykes and Valley Park (Cramlington).

**Blue Tit** *Cyanistes caeruleus*

An Old Hartley garden held one to four during the month (RJP) with one in Jesmond Dene on 19th (MJCo).

**Great Tit** *Parus major*

Three to seven in an Old Hartley garden (RJP) and two in Jesmond Dene on 3rd (MJCo).

**Coal Tit** *Periparus ater*

Two in gardens at Marden Estate (Tynemouth) on 28th (ASJ) and Old Hartley (RJP) with singles at Holywell and Jesmond Dene.

**Willow Tit** *Poecile montanus*

Two juveniles at Big Waters on 8th (SPP) and two adults near nest site at Prestwick Carr on 27th (PCF) with a single seen in an Old Hartley garden on five dates (RJP).

**Marsh Tit** *Poecile palustris*

One was in a garden at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 2nd, 9th and 31st (NFO).

**Skylark** *Alauda arvensis*

At Newton 16 males sang on 2nd with ten there on 23rd and nine at St Mary's Island on 5th (ASJ).

**Hirundine sp**

A large gathering of 200+ consisting mainly Sand Martin basked in sun on spoil heaps at Brenkley on 18th (PCF) with light passage south noted at East Chevington on 19th (EC/JSB).

**Sand Martin** *Riparia riparia*

A large gathering of 800 on the beach south side of estuary at Alnmouth on the afternoon of 9th (NFO), 350+ grounded by showers at Budle Bay on 17th (CGK/GPK), 150 over the Tweed at West Ord (Berwick) on 3rd (MHu) and 100 at Widdrington Moor Lake on 10th (MSH). Thirty fed over rapeseed at Ellington on 9th, were at Holywell Pond on 14th , four at Cullercoats on 7th, two at Howdon on 4th with 15+ adults and juveniles at colony on Priory cliffs (Tynemouth) the first breeding record there (DRW). Light passage south was noted at Seaton Sluice watch tower with a maximum of 20 on 18th (SSWT) and moderate south passage morning of 15th at Budle Bay (CGK/GPK).

**Swallow** *Hirundo rustica*

50+ were grounded by showers at Budle Bay on 17th (CGK/GPK) and ten at Crindledy Kes on 2nd (JMA). The second county record of fledging from a natural cave nest was three young by a pair nr Stonehaugh on 7th (ASJ), whilst a pair nested in a skip at Alnwick tip on 2nd (JMA) with two family parties at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 14th and a pair and three young in the public hide at Holywell Pond on 30th (DM/ASJ).

**House Martin** *Delichon urbica*

At Canty's Brig (Berwick) 60 were around the colony of 30AON on 23rd (TBr), 55 fed over fields near Holywell Pond on 11th with around 40 over the pond on 31st (ASJ/LJM). 30 fed over fields at St Mary's Island on 6th, 30 from 15 nests on waterworks building at Great Tosson on 10th, 30 at Upper Coquetdale on same date and at Old Hartley on 22nd with 20 at Druridge Pools on 2nd. Large young were in each of ten nests at Shillmoor on 10th with two to 25 at Holywell Dene, Howdon, Jesmond Dene and a pair nesting on Whitley Chapel Village Hall.

**Long-tailed Tit** *Aegithalos caudatus*

Four family parties totalling ca.30 birds were at Holywell Waggonway on 5th (ASJ). Family parties were also reported from Cramlington (Alexandra Park), Elswick, Exhibition Park, Lower Ouseburn and North Seaton Colliery, while 12 birds were noted at Dinnington, five at Holywell Dene and at Tynemouth and two at Whitley Chapel.

**Chiffchaff** *Phylloscopus collybita*

One to three were reported from Alnmouth, Alnwick, Blackhall Mill, Jesmond Dene, North Shields and Whitley Chapel.

**Willow Warbler** *Phylloscopus trochilus*

Pairs with fledged young were reported from Arcot Pond, Backworth, Beacon Hill (Longhorsley) and Wingates (many pairs). A passage juvenile was at Holy Island on 31st.

**Blackcap** *Sylvia atricapilla*

A total of six were noted from five Jesmond Dene localities on 3rd (MJCo). A family party was at Marden Quarry on 31st and one to two were noted at Corbridge, Leazes Park, Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay), Steel (Hexhamshire) and Woolsington.

**Garden Warbler** *Sylvia borin*

The only report this month was from Wingates on 10th - five singing males and a pair with three fledged young (ASJ).

**Whitethroat** *Sylvia communis*

At least four family parties were at Backworth on 24th (CGK), four family parties (20 birds) at St Mary's Island on 25th (ASJ) and a family party at Arcot Pond on 30th. Eight were singing at Wingates on 10th and one to two were noted at Corbridge, Holywell Dene and North Shields.

**Grasshopper Warbler** *Locustella naevia*

One to two were noted at Arcot Pond, Bellasis Bridge, Blakehopeburnhaugh (Kielder), Castle Island, Cresswell Pond, East Chevington, Ellington, Greenlee Lough, Prestwick Carr and Ryal.

**Sedge Warbler** *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

Eight were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 4th (SR). Singing birds included five at St Mary's Island, four at West Hartford and three at Arcot Pond, while a pair with two fledged young was at Newton Pool on 23rd.

**Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

The peak count from Gosforth Park NR was six (NHSN), five were singing at Ladyburn Lake and two at Newton Pool. Two singing from the now well established *phragmites* reed bed at QEII CP was the observer's first record from here, while singles were also in song at Big Waters, Cresswell Pond, Rising Sun CP and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

**Nuthatch** *Sitta europaea*

One to three was reported from Holywell Dene and Jesmond Dene.

**Treecreeper** *Certhia familiaris*

Seven at Holywell Dene on 1st included recently fledged young (RJP). One was found dead against patio doors at Ellington and a single was noted at Rothbury.

**Wren** *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Four were reported from Holywell Dene and Jesmond Dene.

**Starling** *Sturnus vulgaris*

A large, broad band of ca.3,000 birds came in off the sea at Tweedmouth during the early morning of 13th (MHu). Nearby around 400 (mainly juveniles) were noted at Berwick on 23rd and 360 were at West Ord (Berwick) on 10th. A gathering of 250+ was reported from Monks' House Pool on 13th, while flocks of 100-150 were noted at Boulmer, Prestwick Carr and Stanington and 20-25 from a further five localities.

**Dipper** *Cinclus cinclus*

One to three were reported from Bywell Bridge, Harthope Valley, Holywell Dene and Usway Burn (Upper Coquetdale).

**Blackbird** *Turdus merula*

Three to four were reported from Holywell Dene and Jesmond Dene.

**Song Thrush** *Turdus philomelos*

One to two were reported from Holywell Dene, Howden and Jesmond Dene.

**Mistle Thrush** *Turdus viscivorus*

19 at Whitley Chapel on 7th was the largest gathering (ASJ). Counts of nine came from Chugdon Wood (Ellington) and Stocksfield and a family party with at least two fledged juveniles was at Newcastle Civic Centre. Three were noted at Whittle Dene Reservoirs and a single at Jesmond Dene.



**Spotted Flycatcher** *Muscicapa striata*

At least three adults, each with a juvenile were noted at Tarset Burn on 12th (AA). A family party of five was at Linden Hall on 31st and an adult and a juvenile were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 4th. Elsewhere singles were at Corbridge, Derwent Reservoir and Usway Burn.



A family of Spotted Flycatchers at Ingram by Alan Jack

**Robin** *Erithacus rubecula*

Three were at Jesmond Dene on 3rd and a single at Old Hartley.

**Redstart** *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

One to three at Plessey Hall Farm from 21st-27th may have been an indication of local breeding. Two juveniles were at Doddington on 13th, a female was at Tweedmouth (Sewage Works) on 21st and a bird was noted at Prestwick Carr on 29th.

**Whinchat** *Saxicola rubetra*

A total of 16 in Upper Coquetdale on 10th included a pair feeding three fledged young (ASJ). Two adults and a juvenile were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 19th, two were reported from St Mary's Island on 7th and 18th, and a male and female were in the Harthope Valley on 7th. Singles were at Hartley on 21st, West Hartford on 17th and Widehope on 1st.

A Whinchat at Alwinton  
by Alan Jack

**Stonechat** *Saxicola rubicola*

Pairs with three fledged young were noted at Cocklawburn on 5th and 12th and East Chevington on 3rd (MHu/IK). A female with four fledged young was at Old Hartley on 24th (ASJ), two juveniles were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 19th and an adult and one juvenile at Druridge Pools on 25th.



**Wheatear** *Oenanthe oenanthe*

In Upper Coquetdale (Shillmoor-Fairhaugh) a total of 19 on 3rd were mostly immatures (IRD). Juveniles on passage at Derwent Reservoir comprised a single on 1st, two to four from 23rd-26th and three on 30th (IFO). Juveniles were at Budle Bay from 10th, with a peak of four on 22nd (GPK) and one to two juveniles were at Newbiggin on 12th and 29th. Single birds were also reported from Cocklawburn, Druridge Pools, Mootlaw Quarry (Ryal) and Snab Point.

**Duncock** *Prunella modularis*

Three newly hatched chicks observed at Mickley during the month, with three at Jesmond Dene on 19th. One to two were in gardens at Old Hartley and Marden Estate.

**House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus*

Hedgerows at St Mary's adjoining a stubble field attracted a large gathering, including many juveniles, of 180-200 birds (photograph), towards the month's end (ASJ). 67 noted along hedgerow at Holywell village on 31st (LJM). 16 on feeders in a Tynemouth Garden on 4th (CB). 15 at Prestwick Carr on 7th and 12 in an Alnwick garden on 5th (PCF/JMA). At feeders, in Old Hartley six noted and a single at Howden was the site's first.

**Tree Sparrow** *Passer montanus*

15+ were at Waren Mill caravan park on 30th (CGK/GPK). A pair with a second brood of three young were at Dinnington on 4th (PCF). Four noted at Plessy Hall Farm (Cramlington) on 24th (DM).

**Yellow Wagtail** *Motacilla flava*

The month's peak count involved 11 at Whittle Dene on 4th (SR). Six+ at Low Newton Scrape on 29th (MHS). A pair and three juveniles seen at Druridge Pools on 17th (TF/JFa). One-four were noted at the above sites on many further dates and also at six other coastal sites during the month.

A dark headed Yellow Wagtail seen in fields at Christon Bank on 13th is thought to have been a Blue-headed (JBu).

**Grey Wagtail** *Motacilla cinerea*

At Bywell Bridge a pair fed young in a nest on 9th (PCF). Four noted in Harthope Valley on 7th (TRD/JD). One-three at 12 further mainly riverine sites during the month.

**Pied Wagtail** *Motacilla alba*

21 were counted at Cresswell Pond (incl. 15 juveniles) on 21st and 19 at St Mary's (12 juveniles) on 28th (PCF/ASJ). One-four at three other sites.



A pied Wagtail has a stretch at Whittle Dene  
Alan Jack

**Tree pipit** *Anthus trivialis*

Fewer reports this month with singles only noted at Blakehopeburnhaugh, Harthope, Netherwitton and Thrunton (TRD/JD).



**Meadow Pipit** *Anthus pratensis*

35 at Northumberlandia(Cramlington) on 30th(STH). 12 were displaying at Wingates on 10th, as were several at St Mary's to the month's end, where a pair fed young in a nest(ASJ). Six were seen on Newcastle Town moor on 19th(DM).



A Meadow Pipit  
St. Mary's  
Alan Jack, 18th July

**Rock Pipit** *Anthus petrosus*

Six at Rockcliffe(Cullercoats) on several dates included a juvenile bird(IJ/ASJ). Four fed on beaches at St Mary's on several dates, with one in a Low Newton garden on 23rd(ASJ). Two seen on the Farne Islands on 2nd(TRD).

**Chaffinch** *Fringilla coelebs*

Poorly reported this month with up to three frequenting an Old Hartley garden and three in Jesmond Dene on 3rd.

**Bullfinch** *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

One-six visited an Old Hartley garden throughout the month, with a juvenile seen on one date(RJP). Two pairs were in a Morpeth garden on 30th and a pair drinking from a puddle along a Holywell waggonway on 20th(TD/ASJ). One-three at nine further sites.



**Greenfinch** *Carduelis chloris*

A pair with three young visited a garden feeder at Marden Estate on many dates, as did two birds at Old Hartley(ASJ/RJP). Several noted throughout the month on Rosehips at St. Mary's(ASJ).

**Linnet** *Carduelis cannabina*

A flock at Ellington of 40 birds on 9th, rose to 75 by 21st (TB). 30 were at Backworth on 20 th(CGK) and at St. Mary's several family groups, totalling 20-24 noted during July(ASJ).

**Crossbill** *Loxia curvirostris*

Nine in flight seen at Corbridge Common on one occasion(DLe). Four were at Addycombe on 27th(TRD). One lucky observer had a male visit a Linden Hall garden on 2nd(NFO).Singles heard at Sweethope and Thrunton.

**Goldfinch** *Carduelis carduelis*

Feeding flocks numbering 40 birds were at Backworth on 20th and St. Mary's (including juveniles) on 27th(CGK/ASJ). 30 at Newcastle Town Moor on 29th and 20 at Ellington on 12th(GB/TB). At garden feeders in Marden Estate, a family party of seven remained all month(ASJ). Eight were at Prestwick Carr on 3rd(PCF).

**Siskin** *Carduelis spinus*

A pair and two juveniles at a Morpeth garden feeders on 2nd(TD).Two flew south over Shiremoor on 3rd(CGK). Two in a Linden Hall garden on 9th and at Budle bay on 10th(NFO/GPK).

**Yellowhammer** *Emberiza citronella*

37 counted over a four km square area at Whiteadder Point(Berwick) on 23rd(TBr). Singing males noted at Low Newton on 23rd(6), Holywell, all month (five) and Alwinton on 10th(three). (ASJ).Three sang at Beacon Lane(Cramlington) on 1st and 3rd(DM) and two sang at Milkwell(Corbridge) on 25th(RB/MB).

**Reed Bunting** *Emberiza schoeniclus*

20 singing males found at Whiteadder Point(Berwick) in a four km square on 22nd(TBr). Up to Eight+ were at Gosforth Park all month(NNHS). At St. Mary's six were still singing on 29th and a pair noted on 6th(ASJ/JMA). One to five seen in an old Hartley garden during the month(RJP) and four at Arcot Pond on 1st(DM).Two noted at Howden on 24th(CB).A single at Plessey Hall on 24th.

**ESCAPES, HYBRIDS AND BIRDS OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN****Escapes****Black Swan** *Cygnus atratus*

The adult on the Tweed Estuary seen last month remained all month (MHu). A juvenile was also seen at Shield on the Wall on 25th with a Mute Swan (MRS).

**Bar-headed Goose** *Anser indicus*

Three adults were at Derwent Reservoir on 24th (IFo) and one was seen flying south at Cocklawburn on 5th (MHu).

**Hybrids****Canada Goose x Greylag Goose** *Branta canadensis x Anser anser*

Two were noted at Druridge Pools on 31st (TF / Jfa).

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**Apologies for any accidental omissions****BULLETIN COMPILATION AND PRODUCTION**

This bulletin was compiled by Graeme Bowman (Mute Swan to Ruddy Duck), Steve Laing (Red Grouse to Black-necked Grebe), Trevor Blake (Honey-buzzard to Crane),Tom Brewis (Avocet to Godwit), Ian Forsyth (Turnstone to Skua), Eddie Crabtree (Puffin to Great Black-backed Gull), Tim Dean (Escapes, Hybrids and Unknown Origin, List of Contributors, Highlights), Peter Fletcher (Feral Pigeon to Red-rumped Swallow), Mike Richardson (Cetti's Warbler to Pied Flycatcher), Alan Jack(Dunnock to Corn Bunting), Kathy Evans (WeBS Coastal Counts) and Steve Holliday (WeBS Inland Counts).

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Thanks to David Sanders of NNBC for providing data.

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## RECORD SUBMISSION

Please email records for the month to [ntbc.records@googlemail.com](mailto:ntbc.records@googlemail.com)  
Please email for a copy of the standard spreadsheet and other details.

Location names and grid references: Please use of standard location names and include grid references as this greatly increases the value of records in subsequent analyses. A 1km square grid reference is the ideal e.g. NY8067 for Grindon Lough, but 2km square references (tetrads) are also acceptable e.g. NY86D in this case. A list of localities and their tetrad grid references (tetrad/Locality List) can be downloaded from the 'Resources & Downloads' section of the Club website at <http://www.ntbc.org.uk> – the use of these names, wherever possible, would be highly appreciated.

Could club members ensure they to submit records direct to NTBC rather than just Birdtrack. There may be an assumption by some members this happens automatically. We do not want to miss records.

## PHOTOGRAPHS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Please keep submitting your articles, photographs, sketches and illustrations for the bulletin. Thanks again to those who have supplied the excellent photographs. Please send to Steve Barrett at [NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com](mailto:NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com)

It is preferable if you re-size your photos before sending and a suggested size is 640 x 480 pixels. Please ensure you include the following information with your submissions: name, species, date taken, locality.

Photographs will not be used elsewhere without the photographer's permission.

## MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Annual membership costs £10 for a junior, £30 for an individual, and £32 for a family.

For membership enquiries please contact [ntbc@jobentley.plus.com](mailto:ntbc@jobentley.plus.com)

Membership subscriptions were due at the beginning of October. If you internet bank you can pay online: please include your name in the ref. It is helpful if you email me to let me know when you've made the transfer [ntbc@jobentley.plus.com](mailto:ntbc@jobentley.plus.com)

If you decide to set up a standing order please date the first payment at least a fortnight from your posting date to allow time to process with the bank. You can also set up your standing order directly with your bank if you wish; just let me know.

Finally, if you know anyone who might like to join NTBC please pass on the club information - new members are always welcome.

**Jo Bentley - Hon Treasurer**

## NTBC AGM

The Club Annual General Meeting will be held on 8th October before the Indoor Meeting. Nominations for committee are welcome. Please send nominations with a seconder to Andrew Brunt at [ntbcorg@gmail.com](mailto:ntbcorg@gmail.com)

## NTBC WEB SITE

The Club website is an excellent resource for all interested in birds in the north-east. There are numerous interesting sections, including a photograph gallery, site information and trip reports together with extensive reference information for birding in our area. Please submit any new content for the website to the main club email address.

## NTBC SIGHTINGS PAGE

The Sightings Page contains current reports by members. Access is from the NTBC website and an email notification is available for new postings. Members need to submit a request to be added to the website, specifying the email address they wish to post from before they can submit sightings to [ntbcorg@gmail.com](mailto:ntbcorg@gmail.com)

## INLAND WeBS COUNTERS

Inland WeBS counters needed in the future! Although there are no inland sites available at the present time it is envisaged that opportunities for taking over a site will become available during the next year or two. If you are interested in lodging your name, home location and contact details in case a site becomes open please contact Steve Holliday email [steveholiday@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:steveholiday@hotmail.co.uk)

Steve Holliday

## THE NORTH OF ENGLAND RAPTOR CONFERENCE 2016

This year's North of England Raptor Conference is being hosted by:-

The Durham Upland Bird Study Group and  
The Durham Bird Club

Saturday 19th November at the Xcel Centre - [www.Xcelcentre.com](http://www.Xcelcentre.com)

Aycliffe Business Park, County Durham, DL5 6AP.

It is open to all with an interest in raptors in the uplands. To learn more about the full one-day programme and how to book please go to [www.raptorforum.co.uk/conference](http://www.raptorforum.co.uk/conference) or contact: [davidrawdubsg@aol.com](mailto:davidrawdubsg@aol.com) for more information.



Above, Great Spotted Woodpeckers, adult and juvenile, at Ingram  
and below a Mediterranean Gull in full summer plumage at Newbiggin, both by Alan Jack





COASTAL WeBS COUNTS: NORTHUMBERLAND										TAC	T. A. Cadwallender						
										MLC	M. L. Cadwallender	LJM	L. J. McDougall				
June	2016		TB	T. Brewis						AC	A. Craggs	DMT	D. M. Turner				
			MHu	M. Hutcheson						KAE	K A Evans	PF	P. Fletcher				
Site	TOTAL	Berwick North Shore (including Little Beach)	Tweed Estuary	Spittal - Cocklawburn	Tweed: A1 By-Pass to Gainslaw House	Whiteadder Water	Lindisfarne NNR (including Budle Bay)	(Budle Bay)	Budle Pt - Seahouses	Seahouses - Beadnell	AIn Estuary	Blyth Estuary	Tyne North Pier - Fish Quay	East Howdon, (north bank only)	Redrough - Scotswood Bridge, (north bank)	Scotswood - Newburn Bridge, (north bank)	
Counter		MHu	MHu	MHu	TB	TB	AC	AC	KAE	MLC	TAC	LJM	DMT	DMT	PF	PF	
Date		2	6	7	21	20	5	6	19	14	14	5	24	24	5	5	
Little Grebe	2										2						
Cormorant	87	8	3	3		1	31			15		9	9	8			
Shag	11	3							8								
Grey Heron	52	4	13	1	3	4	8	1	1	4	7			4	3		
Mute Swan	377		334		13	4	4	2		1	13	8					
Canada Goose	84		3				10		28		21	22					
Light-bellied Brent Goose	4						4										
Shelduck	194		2		2		133	80		3	24	16			14		
Gadwall	2										2						
Teal	11						5				6						
Mallard	198		25	2	29	24	25	20		1	52	14			12	14	
Tufted Duck	3						1				2						
Eider	670	16	11	24			243	9	138	205	7	19	7				
Common Scoter	24	24															
Red-breasted Merganser	29						29	1									
Goosander	53	2	2		34					8		6	1				
Moorhen	16					2	1				12	1					
Coot	6			2			2				2						
Oystercatcher	307	26	16	4	1	1	147	25	17	66	11	12	6				
Ringed Plover	33			4			14			15							
Lapwing	83						15				68						
Sanderling	9						9										
Dunlin	10						10										
Black-tailed Godwit	20										20						
Bar-tailed Godwit	141						141										
Whimbrel	2						2										
Curlew	244	1	5	4			220				5	7	1	1			
Redshank	9						4	2			5						
Common Sandpiper	2					2											
Turnstone	53						13		4	36							
Black-headed Gull	683		18		8	1	302	20	27	15	35	254		19	4		
Common Gull	60						54				4		2				
Lesser Black-backed Gull	89	2	2		1		7	4		2		33		5	35	2	
Herring Gull	1,587	105	260	42		23	140	10	18	195	6	215	156	29	194	204	
Great Black-backed Gull	36	2	5										25		3	1	
Kittiwake	385	19	12							330			24				
Sandwich Tern	37			5			10		4	5	4	2	7				
Common Tern	10											2	4	1	2	1	
Arctic Tern	78						73			5							
Little Tern	9						4	1		5							
ADDITIONAL SPECIES																	
Little Egret	4						3					1					
Guillemot	8	8								81							
Gannet	23									23							
Fulmar	12	2	2	2					2	4							
TOTALS - WILDFOWL	1,791	57	393		81	35	496	113	175	237	150	95	17	12	29	14	
- WADERS	901	27	21		1	3	575	27	21	117	109	19	7	1	0	0	
- GULLS & TERNS	2,927	128	297		9	24	590	35	49	557	49	506	218	54	238	208	

COASTAL WeBS COUNTS: NORTHUMBERLAND							TAC	T. A. Cadwallender								
							MLC	M. L. Cadwallender		LJM	L. J. McDougall					
June	2016		TB	T. Brewis			AC	A. Craggs		DMT	D. M. Turner					
			MHu	M. Hutcheson			KAE	K A Evans		PF	P. Fletcher					
Site	TOTAL	Berwick North Shore (including Little Beach)	Tweed Estuary	Spittal - Cocklawburn	Tweed: A1 By Pass to Gainslaw House	Whiteadder Water	Lindisfarne NNR (including Budle Bay)	(Budle Bay)	Budle Pt - Seahouses	Seahouses - Beadnell	Aln Estuary	Blyth Estuary	Tyne North Pier - Fish Quay	East Howdon, (north bank only)	Redheugh - Scotswood Bridge, (north bank)	Scotswood - Newburn Bridge, (north bank)
Counter		MHu	MHu	MHu	TB	TB	AC	AC	KAE	MLC	TAC	LJM	DMT	DMT	PF	PF
Date		2	6	7	21	20	5	6	19	14	14	5	24	24	5	5
Little Grebe	2										2					
Cormorant	87	8	3	3		1	31			15		9	9	8		
Shag	11	3							8							
Grey Heron	52	4	13	1	3	4	8	1	1	4	7			4	3	
Mute Swan	377		334		13	4	4	2		1	13	8				
Canada Goose	84		3				10		28		21	22				
Light-bellied Brent Goose	4						4									
Shelduck	194		2		2		133	80		3	24	16			14	
Gadwall	2										2					
Teal	11						5				6					
Mallard	198		25	2	29	24	25	20		1	52	14			12	14
Tufted Duck	3						1				2					
Eider	670	16	11	24			243	9	138	205	7	19	7			
Common Scoter	24	24														
Red-breasted Merganser	29						29	1								
Goosander	53	2	2		34					8		6	1			
Moorhen	16					2	1				12	1				
Coot	6			2			2				2					
Oystercatcher	307	26	16	4	1	1	147	25	17	66	11	12	6			
Ringed Plover	33			4			14			15						
Lapwing	83						15				68					
Sanderling	9						9									
Dunlin	10						10									
Black-tailed Godwit	20										20					
Bar-tailed Godwit	141						141									
Whimbrel	2						2									
Curlew	244	1	5	4			220				5	7	1	1		
Redshank	9						4	2			5					
Common Sandpiper	2					2										
Turnstone	53						13		4	36						
Black-headed Gull	683		18		8	1	302	20	27	15	35	254		19	4	
Common Gull	60						54				4		2			
Lesser Black-backed Gull	89	2	2		1		7	4		2		33		5	35	2
Herring Gull	1,587	105	260	42		23	140	10	18	195	6	215	156	29	194	204
Great Black-backed Gull	36	2	5										25		3	1
Kittiwake	385	19	12							330			24			
Sandwich Tern	37			5			10		4	5	4	2	7			
Common Tern	10											2	4	1	2	1
Arctic Tern	78						73			5						
Little Tern	9						4	1		5						
ADDITIONAL SPECIES																
Little Egret	4						3					1				
Guillemot	8	8								81						
Gannet	23									23						
Fulmar	12	2	2	2					2	4						
TOTALS - WILDFOWL	1,791	57	393		81	35	496	113	175	237	150	95	17	12	29	14
- WADERS	901	27	21		1	3	575	27	21	117	109	19	7	1	0	0
- GULLS & TERNS	2,927	128	297		9	24	590	35	49	557	49	506	218	54	238	208

INLAND WEBS COUNTS: NORTHUMBERLAND

Year: 2016 Version: Interim

Month: July

	Site																				TOTAL				
	Airy Holm Reservoir	Big Waters	Bothal Pond	Branton GP	Broomlee Lough	Castiron	Castle Island	Drundge Pools	East Chevington	Greenlee Lough	Grindon Lough	Hauxley NR	Hedgeley GP	Holburn Moss	Killingworth Lake	Leazes Park	Linton Pond	Monks' House Pool	Newsham Pond	Shield on the Wall		Swallow Pond	West Stobswood	Widdrington Moor	Woodhorn Flashes
Counters	IFo	LJM	GB	TD	KD	MRS	JD	STH	IDR	JL	MRS	MRS	IF	KD	EH/PS	LJM	DM	CH	KE	AD	MRS	SPP	JL	JL	JGS
Date	24	20	3	24	23	NC	24	24		25	25	25	29	23	24	26	25	10	NC	24	25	17	25	25	
Ice Cover (%)																									
	53	3	6	2	8	3	4	4		7			3	1				2		4	5	1			
	23	2		3	2	2	3			6						5									
	130						72			51			7												
	31				5		3	8		2			2	1			3						7		
	9						9																		
	249		2	8	2	10	35	31		38	7		2	8			4	2		2	1	7		14	
	622	239		1	38		112			2			61	95	74										
	477		8	17	19		144	28		19	17	34	31			65	20	12				24	39		
	2						1						1												
	8						8																		
	55		1																						
	32		5	4	1		2	5		1			8				6								
	42		2				7						24	9											
	526	6	17	30	19	57	10	117		49	20	24	7	23		29	8	16		18	8	58	1	9	
	4									4															
	18		1	10														6						1	
	184	2	11	2	22	55	2			13			8			15	4	11			3	13	11	12	
	3																							3	
	1					1																			
	1																								
	53		2	3	9	4	2	5		2			3	2		1	7	1		2					
	230		20	14	89	17	2			4			2			43	10	17			3	7	2		
	73		2		10		4	3		2			50									1		1	
	2												2												
	788	1	1	106	125		135	85		4	22	50	187									40	32		
	20							8		3			9												
	10			3	1		6																		
	2												2												
	185						60						125												
	7							6					1												
	66							1					65												
	1							1																	
	1							1																	
	2							2																	
	17		2					8					6											1	
	31												31												
	413		3	14	4			163		3	19	5				113	16					25	48		
	6	2																							
	Common Gull																								
	Lesser Black-backed Gull	21	1	1	1			2	5				3			1	1			1			5		
	Herring Gull			1				23	7						61		2						25		
	Great Black-backed Gull	7	1				1		2		3														
	Sandwich Tern	12											1												
	Common Tern	55	1	9				4	21	1		14				3					2				
	Arctic Tern	5							5																
	1												1												
	ADDITIONAL SPECIES																				1				
	Black Swan	1																							
	Domestic Duck	1														1									



# Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

<http://www.ntbc.org.uk/>

**Bulletin 2016 No 8**

**MONTHLY SUMMARY AUGUST 2016**

**3rd October 2016**



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## CLASSIFIED LIST HIGHLIGHTS

Ruddy Shelduck	An un-ringed bird at Bothal Pond on 21st was potentially from the continent.
Garganey	Single at Gosforth Park on 29th, surprisingly the only sighting.
Bittern	Elusive summering bird at Gosforth Park all month.
Little Egret	High count of 17 at Cresswell Pond on 24th.
Great White Egret	Adult again at Druridge Pools from 30th.
Curlew Sandpiper	Marked passage with maximum of ten at Boulmer on 29th.
White-rumped Sandpiper	Excellent find in Amble Harbour from 21st.
Spotted Sandpiper	The month's highlight with one found at Hauxley from 4th to 19th.
Spotted Redshank	Surprisingly the only records were an adult and a juvenile at Budle Bay from 14th.
Long-tailed Skua	Single juvenile past Tynemouth on 28th.
Black Tern	Popular juvenile at QE II CP from 21st to 24th. Singles at Tynemouth & Seaton Sluice.
Caspian Gull	Returning yellow-ringed adult from Poland 'PKCS' in Amble Harbour from 18th.
Bonaparte's Gull	First-summer still at Wansbeck Estuary until 9th.
Short-eared Owl	Only sighting all month was of one on Holy Island on 14th.
Hobby	Single sightings at Gosforth Park and near Rothbury.
Red-backed Shrike	One at Howdon wetland on 29th.
Barred Warbler	First-winter on Holy Island on 20th.
Grasshopper Warbler	Breeding survey showed at least 29 territories in Cramlington area this year.
Icterine Warbler	First-winter at Cresswell Pond on 21st.
Pied Flycatcher	Influx on 28th with ten on Holy Island.



A Cuckoo at The Snook, Holy Island by Mike Carr on 28th August

## INDOOR MEETINGS

NTBC indoor meetings are held at Northern Rugby Club, McCracken Park, Great North Road, Newcastle, NE3 2DT starting at 7.00pm and generally finish between 9.00pm-9.30pm.

### 13th October 2016

**Sea watching at KIELDER! – Martin Davison.** Is it possible to sea watch at a very inland site? Is it worth the effort? Are there “sea birds” at Kielder? Find out! And vote in the AGM while you're there.

### 10th November 2016

**South East Scotland Bird Atlas – Mark Holling.** During the years 2007-13, the Lothian and Borders branches of the SOC conducted a tetrad atlas across all of south-east Scotland, with fieldwork in both the winter and breeding seasons, similar to the Northumbria Bird Atlas project. Mark was one of the organisers of the survey and is part of the team which have been analysing and documenting the results. He will present a selection of the findings, many of which are of high conservation interest and, being so close, comparable to the findings in Northumberland.

## FIELD TRIPS

The next field trip is an autumn visit to a popular estuary:

25th September - Alnmouth

Please contact Steve Anderson for details [seaswan@btinternet.com](mailto:seaswan@btinternet.com)

## CLASSIFIED LIST

### Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

Four to six flew S at Berwick on 16th and 24th (MHu). The Tweed Estuary held 406 on 18th (MHu), 148 were further up the River Tweed at New Water Haugh on 14th (MHu), 82 (one cygnet) at Capheaton Lake on 26th (STE), and 41-60 at East Chevington (JL), Killingworth and QEII CP Lakes (LJM/CDH), and the Wansbeck Estuary (STH). Ten to 20 were also at Amble, Howdon (where only one young survived) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, and nine at Bothal Pond. Further breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Bothal Pond	1	7	TD
Newton Pool	1	3	DM <i>et al.</i> On 20th
Foxton Bend	1	2	DM <i>et al.</i> On 20th.

### Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

Two were at the Tweed Estuary on 18th (MHu).

### Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

One was with Greylag Geese *Anser anser* at Hoppen Kiln on 29th (CGK/GPK).

### Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

15 flew W at Ellington on 5th (TB). Precisely 700 were at Derwent Reservoir on 26th (PRM) and again on 28th (IFo). Other large counts involved 180-220 regularly commuting between Budle Bay-Hoppen Kiln during the month (CGK/GPK), 210 at Merryshield Farm GP on 10th (DLe), 182-186 at Bothal Pond (TF/JFa) and Hauxley Reserve (HRS), and 79-122 at Derwent Reservoir, Low Newton and Plenmeller Common. Groups of 15-50 were also at Arcot Pond, Branton GP, East Chevington, Grindon Lough, Milfield and New Water Haugh.

### Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

Large numbers were centred on Bothal Pond, with a peak of 375 (including several hybrid types) between 21st-30th (TD), and Grindon Lough, with a peak of 243 on 21st (TD). Elsewhere, 148 were at Foxton Bend on 20th (DM *et al.*), 65-72 were at Hauxley Reserve (HRS), Killingworth Lake (LJM) and New Water Haugh (MHu), and 20-48 at Derwent Reservoir, Ellington, Newcastle Leazes Park and the Tweed Estuary. One to eight were also at the Blyth Estuary and Druridge Pools.

### Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

Two were at Bothal Pond regularly between 14th-30th (TB/TD/TF/JFa).

### Brent Goose *Branta bernicla*

The first of the autumn occurred on 28th when four pale-bellied *hrota* race birds flew N at Newbiggin (ASH/RSF), Seaton Sluice (SSWT) and Tynemouth (DRW).

### Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea*

An un-ringed adult female was at Bothal Pond on 21st (TB/TRD/JD/TD).

### Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

A total of 14 flew N at Seaton Sluice between 18th-31st (SSWT), 11 were at Amble on 29th, four at Newton Point (SW) and one to two at the Blyth Estuary, Foxton Bend, Hauxley Reserve and Newton Flash.

**Wigeon** *Anas penelope*

Three flew N at Seaton Sluice between 18th-28th (SSWT). Numbers at Grindon Lough built up from 33 on 8th to a peak of 75 by 26th (STH/PRM). Moderate numbers elsewhere involved 13-18 at Derwent Reservoir (IFo), Gosforth Park NR (NHSN) and Plenmeller Common (PRM), four to seven at Amble, Budle Bay, Druridge Pools, Hauxley Reserve and New Water Haugh, and one to two at Arcot, Bothal and Cresswell Ponds, Capheaton Lake and Newton Pool.

**Gadwall** *Anas strepera*

Singles flew S at Seaton Sluice on 20th and 28th (HRS). Peak counts were 57 at Linton Ponds on 21st (CDH), 50 at Hauxley Reserve on 27th (HRS), and 13-15 at Bothal Pond (TD) and Gosforth Park NR (NHSN). Five to seven were at Caistron, Druridge Pools, East Chevington and Marden Quarry, and one at Howdon. Further breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Hauxley Reserve	1	4	HRS. On 12th.

**Teal** *Anas crecca*

A total of 582 flew N and 157 S at Seaton Sluice during the month (33 hours), including 385 N and 73 S between 17th-19th (SSWT), while 20-25 flew N at Newbiggin and Snab Point (TF/JFa/ASH) and 28 S at Spittal Bay on 19th (MHu). Four at Budle Bay on 3rd increased to 250 on 24th (CGK/GPK) when 230 were at East Chevington (IFo), 222 were at Grindon Lough on 27th (PRM), 99 at Arcot Pond (LJM), and 40-62 at Bothal Pond, Derwent Reservoir and Hauxley Reserve. Ten to 31 were also at Beadnell, Berwick North Shore, Charlton Mires, Druridge Pools, Gosforth Park NR and Newton Flash, and one to eight at Amble, the Blyth Estuary, Howdon, Plenmeller Common and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

**Mallard** *Anas platyrhynchos*

Greatest concentrations were 154 at Grindon Lough on 27th (PRM), 144 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 22nd (SR), 142 at Derwent Reservoir on 17th (IFo), 133 at Big Waters on 9th (SPP), 50-95 at Bothal Pond (TD), Budle Bay (JMA) and Druridge Pools (DM), and 17-45 at Arcot and Linton Ponds, Gosforth Park NR, Hauxley Reserve, Monks' House Pool, Newcastle Exhibition and Leazes Parks, Newton flash, Reeth Pond (Newburn) and the Tweed Estuary. Further breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Tynemouth boating lake	1	8	JMA. On 5th
Charlton Mires	1	6	DM <i>et al.</i> Half-grown young on 20th
Newcastle Leazes Park	1	6	DM. Half-grown young on 8th.
Coquet Estuary	1	2	HRS. On 21st

**Pintail** *Anas acuta*

Seven dropped in to Druridge Pools on 17th before moving off N (TF/JFa) and one was there on 20th, six were at Hauxley Reserve on 20th (DM/AIB/GB/LAR) and two to three there on several dates between 13th-27th (IRD/TF/JFa/HRS), and one at Budle Bay on 25th-26th (TF/JFa/CGK/GPK).



Pintail over Druridge Pools  
17th August  
Jonathan Farooqi

**Garganey** *Anas querquedula*

One was at Gosforth Park NR on 29th (MPF/NHSN).



**Shoveler** *Anas clypeata*

At Seaton Sluice, two N on 21st were followed by seven N on 28th (SSWT). Moderate counts included 12 at Druridge Pools on 7th (TB), eight at East Chevington on 15th (JL), six at Cresswell Pond on 24th (IFo), and three to five at Arcot and Bothal Ponds, Derwent Reservoir, Grindon Lough and Monks' House Pool. One to two also frequented Budle Bay, Gosforth Park NR, Hauxley Reservoir and Monks' House Pool on occasional dates.

**Pochard** *Aythya ferina*

Bothal Pond attracted a peak of ten on 5th (TF/JFa), with three to six (five drakes) on several further dates (TD/IFo). Three were at East Chevington (JL), Killingworth Lake (LJM) and Widdrington Moor Lake (TRD), and one to two at Arcot and Linton Ponds, Ladyburn Lake and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

**Tufted Duck** *Aythya fuligula*

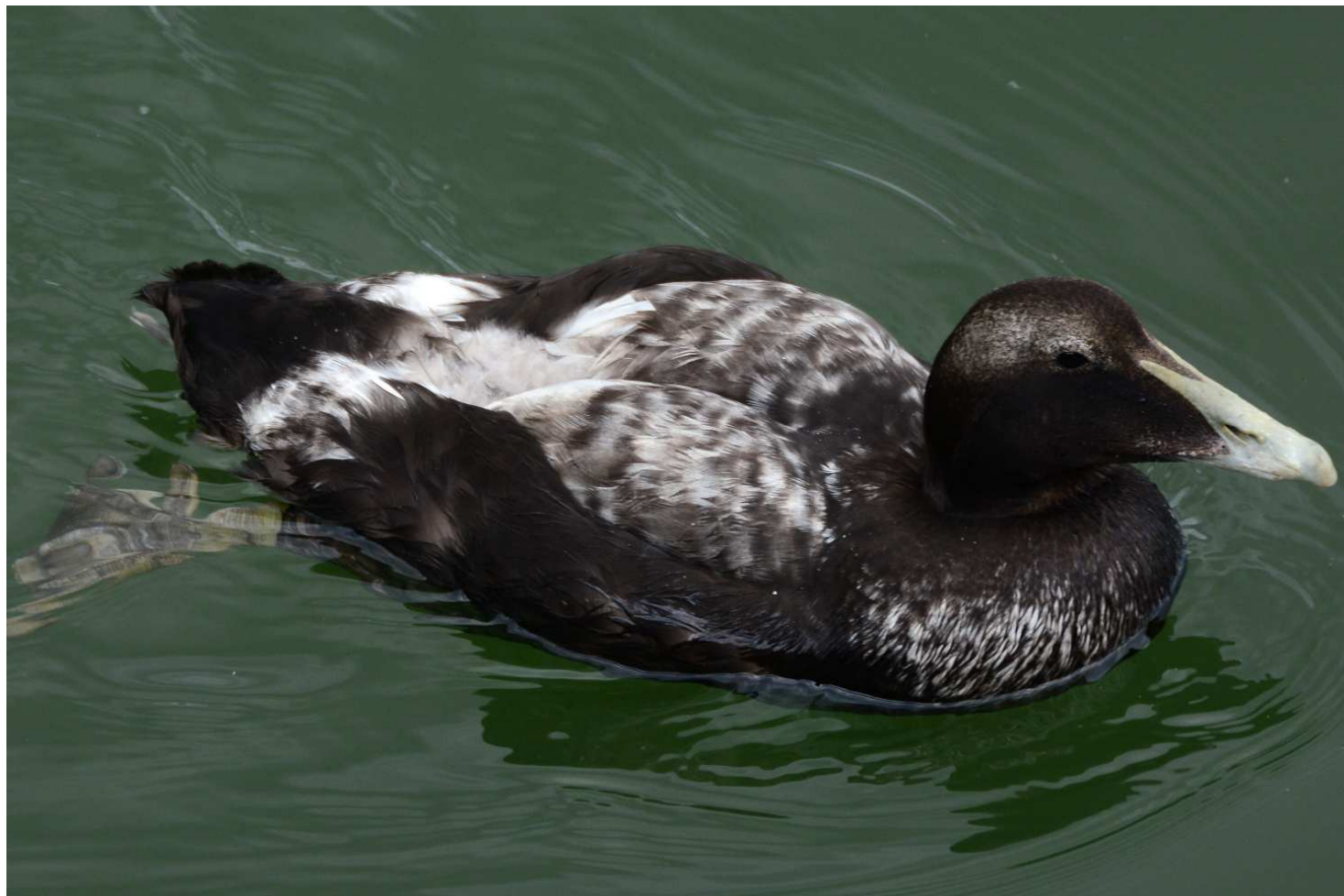
Peak counts were 42 at East Chevington on 5th (IFo), 42 at Widdrington Moor Lake on 15th (JL), 41 at Killingworth Lake on 30th (LJM), 38 at Bothal Pond (TF/JFa) and 23 at Marden Quarry, and ten to 16 at Arcot Pond, Druridge Pools, Hauxley Reserve and Newcastle Leazes Park. Further breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
East Chevington	4	--	AJR. On 14th
Hauxley Reserve	2	16 (11,5)	HRS. On 12th
Bothal Pond	--	14	TF/JFa. On 5th. Probably includes young reported in July.
Woodhorn Flashes	1	4	STH. On 13th.

**Eider** *Somateria mollissima*

146 were at North Blyth on 2nd (STH), 28 at Amble on 29th (PRM), and 15 at Berwick North Shore (MHu). Five to ten were at Beadnell, Seahouses and the Tweed Estuary. Further breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Amble Harbour	1	7	STH. Half-grown young on 2nd



An eclipse male Eider at Amble Harbour  
Tim Dean  
14th August

**Common Scoter** *Melanitta nigra*

The monthly total (33 hours) at Seaton Sluice was a decent 535 N and 103 S and included 215 N on 28th (SSWT), and 17 moved N at Snab Point on 10th (TF/JFa). A group of 250 was off Druridge on 19th (TRD/JD) and 26-40 were noted in the Druridge-Chevington area on various dates between 5th-30th (TRD/JD/AJH *et al.*), 42 were off Cocklawburn on 5th (MHu) and 20 were off North Blyth on 2nd (STH).

**Velvet Scoter** *Melanitta fusca*

Two flew N at Seaton Sluice on 28th (SSWT) and one N at Newbiggin on 5th (TF/JFa).

**Goldeneye** *Bucephala clangula*

One flew N at Snab Point on 10th (TF/JFa). Two were at East Chevington on 24th and one there on 15th (IFo), with singles at Derwent Reservoir on 15th (IFo) and Druridge Pools on 17th (TF/JFa).

**Red-breasted Merganser** *Mergus serrator*

Four flew N at Holy Island on 20th (DM/GB *et al.*). One flew N at Snab Point on 10th (TF/JFa). 20 were at Holy Island on 26th (TD), three at Stag Rocks on 15th (BRS), and one to two at Amble and Newton Point. The brood noted at Budle Bay in July was gradually reduced, presumably by a predator, and no young remained by 12th (GPK).

**Goosander** *Mergus merganser*

A tight flock of 148 was noted at Meadow Haven (Berwick) on 3rd (MHu), 116 were at the Tweed Estuary on 18th (MHu), 76 at Spittal on 24th (MHu), 50-68 at Amble (PRM), the Blyth Estuary (LJM) and New Water Haugh (MHu), 24-46 at Berwick North Shore, Budle Bay and West Ord, and 15 at Branton GP. Seven were at Boulmer and Foxton Bend, three at Whittle Dene Reservoirs and Widdrington Moor Lake, and one to two at Amble Braid, Bothal Pond, Druridge Pools, Newbiggin, Holy Island and Tynemouth.

Further breeding data were as follows (additional to previous months unless otherwise stated):

Locality	No. of broods	No. of young	Observer/notes
Castle Island	1	6	TF/JFa. Female with juveniles on 5th



Goosanders strut their stuff at Amble. Chris Barlow

**Red-legged Partridge** *Alectoris rufa*

15 were counted feeding at the edge of a cornfield between Chatton and Holburn on 9th (MP). Two were next to the North Scrape at Big Waters NWT (SPP). One was "cooing" outside the recorder's bedroom window at dawn on 30th - sound described as an "odd, chicken chick type noise" (TRD/JD). A single was also at Northgate (Morpeth) on 4th (TB).

**Red Grouse** *Lagopus lagopus*

15 were on Plenmeller Common on 3rd (TB).

**Black Grouse** *Tetrao tetrix*

Single males were seen at Plenmeller Common on 3rd and 19th.



**Grey Partridge** *Perdix perdix*

11 were at Backworth on 19th (CGK) and West Hartford on 31st (PRM), whilst four were present at The Snook (Holy Island) on 25th (STH/MJC).

**Red-throated Diver** *Gavia stellata*

Total passage recorded during the month at Seaton Sluice Watch Tower was three N and five S in 33 hours of watching (SSWT). Singles were at four other coastal localities.

**Fulmar** *Fulmarus glacialis*

Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) had a maximum of ten all month including three juveniles, of which two fledged. Singles were reported from four other coastal localities.

**Sooty Shearwater** *Puffinus griseus*

Six flew N in one hour (7-8pm) past Snab Point (Cresswell) on 9th (JL), with three N in two hours there on 10th (TF/JFa). Singles were reported past three other coastal points.

**Manx Shearwater** *Puffinus puffinus*

A grand total of 201 N in one hour past Snab Point (Cresswell) on 9th (JL) was followed by 44 N in two hours there on 10th (TF/JFa) and eight S on 28th. Seaton Sluice Watch Tower reported "an extremely low total for the month" of 30 N and 33 S in 33 hours of watching (SSWT). 35 flew N past Church point (Newbiggin) on 5th (TF/JFa).

**Gannet** *Morus bassanus*

The maximum count at Seaton Sluice was 70 N and 45 S on 29th, with similar numbers on several other dates (SSWT). One to ten were seen at various other coastal locations.

**Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Some large congregations were noted throughout the county with Castle Island (River Wansbeck) peaking at 128 on 22nd (STH/IFo), 64 at Amble on 29th (PRM), 32 during a WeBS count at Berwick North Shore on 17th (MHu), 30 at East Chevington on 4th (JMA), 28 at North Shields Jetty on 16th, 27 at Derwent Reservoir on 28th (IFo) and 24 on the breakwater at Newbiggin village bay on 11th (STH). One to 14 birds were at many other locations. The western end of Derwent Reservoir also held three continental "*sinensis*" race birds, including two juveniles, on 3rd (PRM).

**Shag** *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

At Seaton Sluice, birds started to appear in small numbers from the 19th with a maximum count of 16 N and 6 S on 28th (SSWT). 30 were present during a WeBS count at Berwick North Shore on 17th (MHu) and 14 were at the Meadow Haven (Berwick) roost on 3rd.

**Bittern** *Botaurus stellaris*

Last month's returnee at Gosforth Park NR was reported as "elusive" during August.

**Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta*

Numbers at Cresswell Pond gradually built up from single figures at the start of the month to a peak of 17 present on 24th (TF/JFa/TB/MSH *et al.*). A total of 15 were reported flying over Warkworth to roost on 24th (A&D NHS per JMA). Castle Island (River Wansbeck) peaked at 13 on 14th (STH/IFo) whilst one observer visited both Castle Island and Cresswell Pond on the morning of 22nd, amassing a total of 27 individuals across the two sites (STH). One of the Cresswell Pond birds was colour-ringed with a "K" on a white ring and an "S" on a yellow ring on 17th (TF/JFa). Elsewhere, one to seven at Alnmouth, Beal Point, Budle Bay, the Coquet Estuary, Druridge Pools, Holy Island, Holywell Pond, Howdon, Sleek Burn, Warkworth Gut and Widdrington Moor Lake.



Little Egrets at Cresswell Pond  
by Jonathan Farooqi on 2nd August

**Great White Egret** *Ardea alba*

One was in the Druridge area on 30th (AJH).

**Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea*

Howdon peaked at 27 birds on 24th, including two broods still in their nest (CB). 20 were present during a WeBS count at the River Tweed Estuary on 18th (MHu), Cresswell Pond held 17 on 27th (ASJ) and 12 were at Druridge Pools on 24th (IFo). 11 was the maximum at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 1st and Castle Island peaked at ten on 14th. One to eight were at many other localities including five roosting on a cliff face at Little Beach (Berwick) on 10th (MHu).

**Little Grebe** *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

A WeBS count at East Chevington recorded an excellent total of 26 birds present on 15th (JL) and Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) peaked at 16, including two chicks, on 16th (TF/JFa). Both Hauxley NWT and Whittle Dene Reservoirs had a maximum of 12 during the month, with totals of ten recorded at Gosforth Park NR and Airy Holm Reservoir (Shotleyfield). Elsewhere one to eight birds, many with new broods, were at Arcot Pond, Blyth GC, Capheaton, Cresswell Pond, Dinnington, Fallowlees Lough (Harwood Forest), Grindon Lough, Holywell Pond, Laverock Hall Farm Pond (Blyth), Ladyburn Lake, Linton Ponds, Monks' House Pool, Newton Pool, Reeth Pond (Newburn) and Woodhorn Flashes.

**Great Crested Grebe** *Podiceps Cristatus*

Whittle Dene Reservoirs held eight on 15th (SR). Seven, including up to three young, were at East Chevington on 14th (AJR) and Widdrington Moor Lake held five, including two juveniles, during a WeBS count on 15th (JL). One to three were at Bothal Pond, Cresswell Pond, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Pools, Holy Island and Widdrington Moor Lake.



An adult and juvenile Great Crested Grebe at Druridge Pools by Tim Dean on 14th August

**Red Kite** *Milvus Milvus*

Two birds were at Carterway Heads on 20th and a single bird was seen there on 17th (IfO). Other single birds were at Blachland and Whittonstall on 11th (JMA), Derwent Reservoir on 15th (IFo) and at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 31st (PRM).

**Marsh Harrier** *Circus aeruginosus*

A male and two juveniles were at East Chevington on 29th (IF) and a female on 3rd (TB) and a single juvenile on 12th (TRD). Other sightings came from Arcot Pond, Budle Bay, Cramlington, Cresswell, Grindon Lough, Hauxley NWT, Plenmeller Common, Prestwick Carr & Widdrington Moor Lake.

**Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter nisus*

A pair was flying together and young were calling in trees at the same time from Bolam Lake on 10th (CDB) and a pair were calling and displaying at Kirknewton on 30th (MP). Two juveniles were at Simonburn on 6th (JMA). Single birds were noted at Cramlington, Ellington, Ewart Park, Holywell Dene, Jesmond Dene (Newcastle), Longhirst, Morpeth, Newcastle Town Moor, Pegswood, Plenmeller Common, West Chevington and at Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

**Common Buzzard** *Buteo buteo*

At Harwood Forest on 27th six birds were seen (STE) and at Simonside five birds were seen on 27th (ASJ). Four birds were at Derwent Reservoir on 26th (PRM) and three birds were seen at Pegswood on 1st (TB) and at Simonburn on 6th (JMA). One to two birds were recorded at over 20 sites.

**Osprey** *Pandion haliaetuss*

Derwent Reservoir had up to three different individuals throughout the month (IFo/EC/SJB/PRM). Other single birds were at Fenham-le-Moor on 3rd (JD), Budle Bay on 6th (GPK), Haughton Strother (Humshaugh) on 13th (SW) and one flew SW at Druridge Pools on 22nd (TF/JFa). A bird was present on Holy Island causeway from 13th until the end of the month (MJC/ADM/TF/JFa).

An Osprey

28th August

Crag Lough

Chris Barlow

**Water Rail** *Rallus aquaticus*

Two adults and a large juvenile were out on the sandbank at Cresswell Pond 27th (TB) and two adults and a chick were at Gosforth Park NR throughout the month (NHSN). Two calling birds were at Greenlee Lough on 27th (MJC) and singles were either seen or heard at Arcot Pond, Backworth, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Bay CP, East Chevington and Holy Island Lough.

**Moorhen** *Gallinula chloropus*

20 birds plus broods of 4 and 2 young were at Hauxley NWT on 12th (HRS), 11 birds were at Reeth Pond (Newburn) on 27th (PCF) and 10 were at Leazes Park (Newcastle) on 8th (DM). One – nine birds were at Arcot Pond, Brenkley, Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Foxton Bends (Alnmouth), Grindon Lough, Jesmond Dene (Newcastle), Linton Pond, Newton Flash and Plenmeller Common.

**Coot** *Fulica atra*

A counts of 115 birds came from Bothal Pond on 7th (TD) was the highest count this month followed by 60 at Woodhorn Flashes on 21st (CDH), 52 at Killingworth Lake on 23rd (LJM) and 41 at Linton Pond on 21st (CDH). 16 were at Arcot Pond on 27th, 15 at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 15th and 12 at Leazes Park (Newcastle) on 10th (DM). One to nine birds were at Hauxley NWT, Howdon, Laverock Hall (Blyth) and Whittle Dene reservoirs.

**Avocet** *Recurvirostra avosetta*

Virtually all records came from Cresswell Pond with observations of at least four young birds (AJR on 14th, TF/JFa on 17th) and up to five adults (TF/JFa on 17th). A smaller number of records came from R. Wansbeck, Castle Island with two birds reported on 17th (STH, TF/JFa).

**Oystercatcher** *Haematopus ostralegus*

As birds begin to return to their winter quarters so counts have increased in coastal locations. The single largest count was 220 at Budle Bay on 27th (CGK/GPK) with earlier counts of 165 forming high-tide roosts on the Blyth Estuary on 6th (STH) and 142 at Berwick coastguard on 4th (MHu). Between the 10th and 21st, 276 birds were observed offshore from Seaton Sluice with 96N and 180S (SSWT). Other counts of 50 or more birds came from Longhoughton Steel (125 on 27th, SW), Tynemouth (115 on 24th, KWY, DRW), Lynemouth Bay (88 on 27th, ASJ), North Blyth staithes (77 on 17th, STH) and St. Mary's (50 on 15th, JMA). There were also a number of records with lower counts from a range of other coastal sites. The largest inland count was of eleven at Derwent Reservoir on 17th (IFo).

**Golden Plover** *Pluvialis apricaria*

The largest count for the month was of 780+ at Backworth on 17th (SPP) and 620 at the same location on 18th (CGK). There were still significant numbers of birds inland toward the end of the month, as indicated by a count of 610+ at the western end of Derwent Reservoir on 26th (PRM). However, most large counts came from coastal locations: ca. 600 at St. Marys on 26th (CDH), ca. 370 between Howick Haven and Craster on 30th, made up of two flocks of about 170 and 200 (MJC), 211 at Longhoughton Steel on 27th (SW), 200 at St Mary's on 26th (JMA) and 120 at Cresswell Pond on 3rd (TB). Other records came from Berwick North Shore, Cocklawburn, Grindon Lough, Holy Island, Newcastle Town Moor, Newton Point, Plenmeller Common, Seaton Sluice, Spartylea, Westburnhope and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

**Grey Plover** *Pluvialis squatarola*

Eleven birds were recorded at Alnmouth, Buston Links on 21st (TF/JFa) with singles recorded at Budle Bay (9th, GPK) and at Cresswell, Snab Point (10th, TF/JFa).



**Lapwing** *Vanellus vanellus*

Large numbers of birds continued to be recorded at inland locations: 726+ at Derwent Reservoir on 26th (PRM) and 500 at the same location on 1st (lfo), 350 at Corbridge Milkwell on 17th (RB/MB), 130 at Mickley Square (flying W, up the Tyne Valley) on 11th (Dle), 76 at Spartylea on 3rd (PRM), 75 at Grindon Lough on 26th (PRM), 70 at Halton (near Stagshaw Bank) on 14th (SW), 50 at Haltwhistle Common on 16th (Twi) and 28 at Plenmeller Common on 3rd (PRM). Towards and at the coast, the largest counts were 380-413 at Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) on 21st-29th (TD, TF/JFa), 328 at Charlton Mires (N. of Alnwick) on 28th (AH), 155 at Holywell Pond on 31st (ASJ), 150 at Druridge Bay CP on 9th (TB), 128 at Yarrow Slake (R. Tweed) on 2nd (MHu), 82 at Hauxley NWT on 12th (HRS), 77 at St. Mary's on 30th (ASJ), 72 at Amble on 29th (PRM), 64 in the Tweed Estuary on 18th (MHu) and 37 at Ellington on 18th (TB). Counts of 20 or fewer came from a range of other sites.

**Little Ringed Plover** *Charadrius dubius*

Passage migrants were in evidence this month with the largest count of eleven (ten juveniles and one adult) made at Derwent Reservoir on 17th (IFo). Beyond a count of eight at the same site on 3rd (PRM) and a count of two at R. Wansbeck, Castle Island on 14th (STH/IFo), all other records were of singles from Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), Budle Bay, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

**Ringed Plover** *Charadrius hiaticula*

Increased numbers were on the move this month. Berwick Little Beach recorded 92 on 23rd (MHu) and an estimated 75 were noted on the eastern beaches of Holy Island (TD). Longhoughton Steel had 59 birds on 27th (SW) and 52 were at Calot Shad (Tweed Estuary) on 30th (MHu). Other double-figure counts were 45 at Budle Bay on 9th (CGK/GPK), 31+ at Amble on 29th (PRM), 25 in the Wansbeck Estuary on 14th (STH), 19 at St. Mary's on 30th (ASJ), 16 at Hauxley beach on 27th (IRD), 14 at Low Newton, Newton Pool on 14th (AJR), twelve in the Blyth Estuary on 31st (PRM) and ten on the Holy Island causeway on 20th (DM/AIB/GB/IDR). Single figure counts from other sites came from Blagdon, Brenkley, Cocklawburn, Cresswell Pond, Derwent Reservoir and Druridge Pools.



Alan Jack records a confrontation

8th August

St. Mary's Ringed Plovers

**Whimbrel** *Numenius phaeopus*

While a large number of records of Whimbrel were submitted, all were of counts in single figures. Five birds were recorded flying south at Cresswell Pond on 17th (TF/JFa) and the same number were seen, also flying south, off Tynemouth on 28th (DRW). Three birds were seen at Holy Island (MJC), Low Newton (AJR, AJH) and Berwick North Shore (MHu) on 3rd, 17th and 17th, respectively. Other sightings were made at Alnmouth, Amble, Berwick (East Ord), Budle Bay, Druridge Bay, East Chevington, Ellington, Hauxley NWT, Holy Island, Lindisfarne NNR (Beal Point), Longhoughton Steel, Newbiggin and Blyth Estuary.

**Curlew** *Numenius arquata*

With the exception of a handful of sites, all records were from coastal or near-coastal sites. The largest count was from Longhoughton Steel on 27th, where a count of 377 was made (SW). Budle Bay had 320 birds on 27th (CPK/GPK), while 140-160 were seen feeding in fields at Seaton Sluice on 24th (ASJ) and the Blyth Estuary held 92 birds on 6th (STH). A minimum of seventy were seen at Amble on 29th (PRM) while, inland, Castron had 70 birds on 20th (JD) and 66 birds were reported from a WeBS in the Tweed estuary on 18th (MHu). On 20th there were 60 birds reported from the Blyth Estuary and 54 from the Foxton Bend on R. Aln (DM/AIB/GB/IDR). Counts of 20-46 came from Berwick, Cresswell Pond, Hauxley NWT, Holywell Dene, Howdon and St. Mary's. Counts of less than 20 came from Alnmouth, Derwent Reservoir, Holy Island, Plenmeller Common and Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay).



A Curlew at St. Mary's  
6th August by Alan Jack

**Black-tailed Godwit** *Limosa limosa*

Good numbers continued to be reported throughout the month with the highest count of 55 at Castle Island on 14th (STH/IFo), followed by 50 on 21st at Druridge Pools, when 15 were reported from the Budge fields and 35 were seen flying south (TB). On the next day, 34 birds were reported from Druridge Pools (CB/JGS). Prior to this date, Druridge Pools had reports of 2-24 birds on various dates, while nearby Cresswell Pond had reports of 5-27 through the month with the maximum occurring on 12th (TF/JFa). Lynemouth Flash had 35-40 on 20th (DM/AIB/GB/IDR), while the Blyth Estuary held 17 birds on 23rd (LJM) and eight birds were seen flying south at Seaton Sluice (SSWT) on 31st. Other records came from Charlton Mires (n. of Alnwick), Blagdon (Brenkley), Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), Budle Bay, Snab Point (Cresswell), East Chevington, Gosforth Park NR, Grindon Lough, Hauxley NWT, Holy Island, Low Newton and Monks' House Pool.

**Bar-tailed Godwit** *Limosa lapponica*

The largest count of 110 came from Budle Bay on 6th (GPK). Fifty birds were reported from Holy Island (mud flats from Chare Ends) on 20th (DM/AIB/GB/IDR) with twelve birds also seen at Holy Island (NE) on 26th (TD). Beyond these three records, other reports were of one or two birds from Berwick (Little Beach), Blyth Estuary, Cresswell Pond, Cresswell (Snab Point), Hauxley NWT, Newbiggin and the Tweed Estuary.

**Turnstone** *Arenaria interpres*

There was a gradual increase in numbers as more birds returned to the area. The maximum count was 58 at North Blyth Staithes on 17th (STH). Other counts were 30-31 at Holy Island and Amble from 26-29th (TD/PRM) and 22 at Seahouses on 20th. 10-20 were at Berwick, Hauxley, St Mary's Island and Whitley Bay, Rockcliffe. Single-figure counts were at five other



**Knot** *Calidris canutus*

Birds started to arrive from mid-month. At Seaton Sluice 70, mainly adults, flew S from 19th-20th (SSWT). The favoured Bamburgh Stag Rocks area attracted 67 on 15th (BRS). The maximum at Cresswell Pond was 42 on 28th (IRD) and 27 were in Budle Bay on the same date (CGK/GPK). On 17th, 14 were well upstream at Castle Island (TF/JFa), 12 were at Newbiggin on 27th and 10 at Amble and Snab Point (Cresswell) on 22nd-28th. One to six were at 11 other localities including a freshwater records at Bothal Pond on 24th and Derwent Reservoir on 25th (TF/JFa/IFo).



Knot  
Newbiggin  
Colin Bradshaw



**Ruff** *Calidris pugnax*

There was a significant increase in reports as 54 records were received from 18 locations. The highest number was 27 seen at Bradford Kaims on 29th (GPK). At Druridge Pools one on 5th increased to 22 by 21st (TF/JFa/TRD *et al.*) and 12 were at Charlton Mires on 20th (AH). One to six were seen at Berwick, Budle Bay, Bothal Pond, Boulmer, Castle Island, Creswell Pond, Grindon Lough, Hauxley, Holywell Pond, Low Newton, Lynemouth Flash and Widdrington Moor Lake.



A juvenile Curlew Sandpiper at Creswell Pond on 22nd August by Tim Dean

**Curlew Sandpiper** *Calidris ferruginea*

There was an influx of this species into the country in August which was reflected in the numbers seen in our area. Allowing for some duplication, there were approximately 44 birds seen compared to three in August 2015. Many of those seen were juveniles.

The first was a partial summer-plumaged bird at Berwick Little Beach on 3rd with the main influx occurring from 17th. The top location was Boulmer, with ten on 29th (NFO), with nine (possibly 11) at Druridge Pools on 20th (TF/JFa). Five were at Berwick Little Beach, with four at Creswell Pond and Holy Island.

One to three were at Amble, Castle Island, Longhoughton Steel, Lynemouth Flash, Newton Flash and Warkworth Gut.

**Sanderling** *Calidris alba*

At Seaton Sluice, 50 flew south on 8th (SSWT). At St Mary's Island, 56 on 5th increased to 144 the next day the majority remaining all month (ASJ). Along the eastern beaches of Holy island there were ca. 200 on 26th (TRD) and 31-36 favoured the Hauxley-Chiburn Mouth area of Druridge Bay between 14th-27th (AJR/IRD). Counts of 30 came from Berwick Pier on 14th and 24 at Chare Ends, Holy Island on 20th.

Smaller numbers of one to eleven were seen at Amble, Creswell, East Chevington, the Tweed Estuary and Warkworth shore.

**Dunlin** *Calidris alpina*

The highest concentrations were in the north of the county with 210 at Budle Bay on 9th increasing to 400 on 28th (CGK/GPK), ca.300 on the eastern beaches of Holy Island on 26th (TD) and 116 at Berwick Little Beach on 23rd (MHu). Further south 97 were counted at Longhoughton Steel on 27th and 71 at Amble on 29th. Sixty at Creswell Pond on 4th had reduced to ten by 19th. Groups of less than 30 were at Berwick North Shore, Bothal Pond, the Blyth Estuary, Derwent Reservoir, Hauxley, Low Newton, Lynemouth Flash, St Mary's Island, the Tweed Estuary, Warkworth Gut and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

A Dunlin

St. Mary's

by Alan Jack on 10th August





**Purple Sandpiper** *Calidris maritima*

Four roosting at Tynemouth Pier on 18th increased to eight by 27th (SPP). One flew south and Seaton Sluice on 20th.

**Little Stint** *Calidris minuta*

A noticeable influx occurred with birds present in the region throughout the month, with most records being concentrated at Druridge Pools and Cresswell Pond.

Three at Cresswell Pond on 4th included a colour-ringed adult from Norway (TF/JFa). Only one remained by 10th. At Druridge Pools, one on 7th increased to four by 17th, two remaining until 30th (NFO *et al.*). One to two were at Holy Island and Low Newton. A bird at Tynemouth on 25th was only the 3rd documented record from this locality (CGK).

**White-rumped Sandpiper** *Calidris fuscicollis*

A very popular moulting adult remained faithful to the Amble area from 21st-29th (JFa *et al.*).



The Amble White-rumped Sandpiper by Chris Barlow on 26th August

**Common Sandpiper** *Actitis hypoleucos*

At Derwent Reservoir 11 on 3rd declined to two by 27th as birds moved away from breeding areas (PRM/IFo). The maximum counts elsewhere were six at Budle Bay on 9th (GPK), Castle Island on 17th-19th (STH/TF/JFa) and five at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 22nd (SR). Four were at Foxton Bend on the River Aln on 20th.

In the Druridge Bay area, groups of three were at Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools and Hauxley. One to two were at a further 14 other lowland localities. The furthest inland was at Capheaton on 26th (STE).

**Spotted Sandpiper** *Actitis macularia*

A well appreciated summer-plumaged adult at Hauxley was reported between 12th -20th apparently creating the largest twitch in recent years with 70+ birders present at one point.

The popular Spotted

Sandpiper at Hauxley

14th August by

Jonathan Farooqi



**Green Sandpiper** *Tringa ochropus*

Southward movement was well underway this month with the regular haunt of Whittle Dene Reservoirs attracting three on 22nd reducing to one by 31st (SR/PRM). Gosforth Park recorded two birds all month and two were also seen at Bothal Pond, Brenkley (Blagdon), Castle Island and Hauxley.

Single birds were at Amble, Arcot Pond, Backworth, Big Waters, Budle Bay, Charlton Mires, Derwent Reservoir, flying north at Ewart Park (Wooler), Low Newton and Morpeth.

**Spotted Redshank** *Tringa erythropus*

Very scarce this month with the only reports from Budle Bay with an adult from 14th joined by a juvenile from 23rd until the end of the month (GPK/DM *et al.*).

**Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia*

There was a clear arrival from 14th when ten were seen on Holy Island (SR/AH). Ongoing passage at Cresswell Pond saw an increase from one on 2nd to seven on 27th (AA/TB). Other counts were six at Budle Bay on 31st (GPK), five at Foxton Bend, River Aln on 21st (CGK), five at Bradford Kaims also 21st (GPK).

Four were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 22nd.

From 1st-12th one to three were at Big Waters, Charlton Mires, Derwent Reservoir, Gosforth Park, Low Newton, St Mary's Wetland, Tynemouth, Warkworth Bridge and West Hartford.

**Wood Sandpiper** *Tringa glareola*

Last month's bird at Derwent Reservoir remained until 8th (IFo/PRM). Other singles were at Charlton Mires on 4th (AH), Bothal Pond on 7th and 21st (TD), Low Newton Scrape on 16th (AA) and Druridge Pools from 19th-21st (TF/MJC *et al.*).

**Redshank** *Tringa totanus*

Numbers increased in the River Blyth area from July, with 480 on North Blyth Staithes on 17th (280 last month) and 395 at a high-tide roost in the estuary (140 last month) (STH). The monthly maximum at Budle Bay was 320 on 18th (GPK) and WEBS counts revealed 146 on Berwick North Shore on 17th and 126 on the Tweed Estuary on 18th (MHu). A minimum of 100 was at Amble Harbour on 23rd (MSH). Counts of 26-58 came from Berwick coastwatch, Castle Island, Cresswell Pond, Hauxley, Howdon and Whitley Bay (Rockcliffe). A single remained inland at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 15th (SR).

**Woodcock** *Scolopax rusticola*

No reports were received again this month.

**Snipe** *Gallinago gallinago*

More birds appeared this month with a peak of 15 at Druridge Pools on 5th (MSH). Ten were at Bothal Pond on 25th (TRD). Five birds were at Cresswell Pond on 14th, Castle Island on 17th and Charlton Mires on 20th. Inland three were at Capheaton, two at Derwent Reservoir and singles at Plenmeller Common and Grindon Lough.



A dapper Snipe at Druridge Pools on 20th August by Chris Barlow

**Pomarine Skua** *Stercorarius pomarinus*

Two N at Newbiggin on 28th was the only report (ASH).



**Arctic Skua** *Stercorarius parasiticus*

An extremely low monthly total of only 13 N and 23 S in 33 hours of seawatching at Seaton Sluice (SSWT). Elsewhere one to four were noted at Budle Bay-Stag Rocks, Newbiggin, Snab Point (Cresswell), Tynemouth and Warkworth Gut between 3rd-28th.

**Long-tailed Skua** *Stercorarius longicaudus*

A juvenile flew N at Tynemouth at 14.20-14.25 on 28th (DRW).

**Great Skua** *Stercorarius skua*

The only report this month was one flying N at Tynemouth on 28th (DRW). No records from Seaton Sluice during the month were considered exceptional.

**Puffin** *Fratercula arctica*

A single bird on the sea at Seaton Sluice on 10th (SSWT).

**Guillemot** *Uria aalge*

Only three recorded passing Seaton Sluice during the month plus a few on the sea with young (SSWT).

**Little Tern** *Sternula albifrons*

One flew N at Cresswell Snab Point on 3rd (AJ). A very poor breeding season was reported from the Long Nanny colony where only five chicks were known to have fledged (National Trust Rangers).

**Black Tern** *Chlidonias niger*

On 27th-28th three juveniles flew N and one S at Seaton Sluice (SSWT). On 27th, a single juvenile was on the Tynemouth Battery Rocks (SPP) and on 28th, a juvenile, probably the same bird, was off the Tynemouth Pier (DRW). A well-watched juvenile was at the QEII CP from 21st-24th and on the evening of 23rd a juvenile fed off-shore at Beacon Point, Newbiggin (EC).



Black Terns at QEII lake

top: a juvenile on 21st August  
by Tim Dean

below: on 16th August by Colin  
Bradshaw



**Sandwich Tern** *Sterna sandvicensis*

At Seaton Sluice on 19th, 60 S and 15 N were noted otherwise small numbers were recorded here (SSWT). Maximum concentrations of 40-70 throughout the month were at Berwick coastwatch, Lynemouth Bay, the Blyth and Tweed Estuaries and St Mary's Island (MHu/STH/ASJ) with 10-30 elsewhere at Cocklawburn and Newbiggin (MHu/STH). Up to eight were recorded at eight other coastal localities between Howdon and Berwick.

**'Commic' Tern** *Sterna hirundo/paradisaea*

On 28th, several groups were heard flying S after dark at the Waren Mill Caravan Park, suggesting overland passage (CGK/GPK).

**Common Tern** *Sterna hirundo*

From 19th to the month end, 450 passed mainly S at Seaton Sluice with the peak day being the 22nd when 125 passed in one hour (SSWT). Large counts came from Tynemouth from 24th-26th where a maximum of 160+ gathered (CGK/DRW/IRD) and elsewhere 20-50 were noted at Cresswell Pond, East Chevington, Lynemouth Bay, St Mary's Island (TRD/JD/ASJ) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs where, on 1st, 22 birds included five fledged juveniles with two chicks still on the raft (SR). At Gosforth Park NR, two pairs fed young until mid-month and the last chick fledged on 22nd (NHSN). One was reported from the Shasun Pharma works pond at Cramlington (LJM).



Roseate Terns. Top: at Chevington Burn Mouth by Chris Barlow  
and bottom: at Newbiggin by Colin Bradshaw

**Roseate Tern** *Sterna dougallii*

Passage at Seaton Sluice included three N and 11 S from 11th-28th (SSWT) and a maximum count of 24 came from Newbiggin on 22nd (CB *et al.*) with eight, including three juveniles, at Snab Point on 28th (JL) and five at Budle Point until the month end (CGK/GPK). During the second half of the month, on many dates, adults with juveniles were noted at St Mary's Island (SPP), in the Tyne Estuary (CDH/SPP) and also in Lynemouth Bay (ASJ).



**Arctic Tern** *Sterna paradisaea*

A maximum movement of 20 S in two hours on 29th was noted at Seaton Sluice where the species was described as passing in 'much smaller numbers than Common Tern' (SSWT). In the River Tweed Estuary a maximum of 48 gathered in the gull roost on 14th and six were at Cocklawburn on 26th (MHu). The Battery Rocks at Tynemouth proved an attractive roost during the last week, for mainly juveniles, peaking on 25th (DRW).

A catastrophic breeding season was reported from the large Long Nanny colony where only two young were known to have fledged as a result of a number of factors including very poor spring weather, high tides washing out many clutches followed by heavy predation by both Stoats and Kestrels late in the breeding cycle (National Trust Rangers).

**Kittiwake** *Rissa tridactyla*

In the River Tweed Estuary there were 64 on 18th (MHu) with ten noted moving S on 23rd at Berwick Little Beach (TRD/JD) and birds were on the sea at Berwick Needles Eye on 16th (MHu).

**Bonaparte's Gull** *Chroicocephalus philadelphia*

This long-staying rare visitor, a 1st-summer bird, first seen in late May, remained in the Wansbeck Estuary and on Castle Island where it was recorded until 9th (AA/Birdguides).

**Black-headed Gull** *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

The largest counts were at least 1,500 frequenting Budle Point on 28th (CGK), 488 in the River Tweed Estuary on 18th (MHu) and 200 at Corbridge Station on 1st (JMA). Smaller flocks numbering 50-150 were at seven widespread localities, mainly coastal (JMA/DM), with up to 40 at five other sites (DM/JMA).

**Little Gull** *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

Single birds, mainly juveniles, were recorded at Snab Point (Cresswell) on 9th (JL), Tynemouth on 25th (CGK) and Budle Bay and Snab Point on 28th (CGK/JL).

**Mediterranean Gull** *Larus melanocephalus*

This popular species, the subject of 38 records this month, declined in numbers a little from last month's peak of 61. At the favoured Newbiggin, 35 were present on 4th (STH) and Cresswell Pond hosted birds on most dates throughout with a maximum of 29, the majority adults, on 21st (STH *et al.*). Four were at Ellington on 3rd (TB) and at Budle Bay on 28th (CGK) with singles at Backworth, Big Waters, Gosforth Park NR, Holy Island, Holywell Pond and Widdrington Moor Lake.

**Common Gull** *Larus canus*

A build-up in numbers was apparent as birds returned from their northern breeding grounds and in excess of 4,000 were at Budle Point on 28th (CGK), 900 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 26th (SR), 400 at Flodden Field (JMA) and flocks of almost 100 at Berwick (West Ord) and Lowgate. Smaller number were at three other sites.

**Lesser Black-backed Gull** *Larus fuscus graelsii*

Between 15th-28th, 28, mainly juveniles, moved S at Seaton Sluice (SSWT). The Budle Point roost held 75 on 28th (CGK) but elsewhere only one to five were recorded at Arcot Pond, Cramlington, Exhibition Park, Grindon Lough, Jesmond Dene, Leazes Park, the River Blyth and Tweed Estuaries (MJCo/DM/PRM/MHu); an adult at Amble on 22nd was 'possibly' a Baltic Gull *L.f.fuscus* (HRS).



A young Lesser Black -backed Gull at Amble by Colin Bradshaw. This bird caused some much discussion but was agreed to be an advanced first winter LBBG, perhaps a continental bird fledged early

**Herring Gull** *Larus argentatus argenteus*

The maximum gatherings were 620 from a WeBS count in the River Tweed Estuary on 18th (MHu) and 450 at Budle Point on 28th (CGK). Lesser counts of 50-120 came from Alnmouth wetlands, Amble Weir, the Black Middens, Cullercoats, Newbiggin, North Shields Fish Quay, St Mary's Island, the Tyne Estuary, Tynemouth Boating Lake, Tynemouth Longsands and offshore at Whitley Bay (JMA) with up to 20 at five other localities (JMA/DM).

**\*Caspian Gull** *Larus cachinnans*

The Polish yellow-ringed adult, PKCS, first seen in the county at Amble in August 2014 returned again to Amble on 21st and was seen regularly until the month end (TF/JFa/HRS *et al.*).



The returning Caspian Gull at Amble by Chris Barlow

**Great Black-backed Gull** *Larus marinus*

Amble Braid held 84 on 20th (DM) and Budle Point 45 on 28th (CGK). Elsewhere, 10-20 were recorded at Flodden Field, North Shields Fish Quay, the River Tweed Estuary and St Mary's Island (JMA/MHu) with one to nine at six other widespread localities.

**Feral Pigeon** *Columba livia*

On 20th 42 were at Seahouses harbour (DM/GB/LAR) and present in unspecified numbers at Jesmond Dene on 30th.

**Stock Dove** *Columba oenas*

Peak counts of 20 at Howdon on 24th (CB), 12 at Chugdon Wood Ellington on 30th with five at Ellington on 29th (TB), four at Jesmond Dene on 17th (MJCo) and three at New Moor (Ashington), Plenmeller Common on 3rd. One to two were at eight other widespread locations.

**Woodpigeon** *Columba palumbus*

One large count of 55 at Hartley West Farm on 20th (RJP) with four at Jesmond Dene on 30th and in an Old Hartley garden during the month.

**Collared Dove** *Streptopelia decaocto*

On 21st eight were at North Blyth (PCF), five at High Heaton on 23rd (CDH) and Dinnington on 26th with three at Seaton Burn on 25th and one to two in an Old Hartley garden during the month.

**Cuckoo** *Cuculus canorus*

All reports single juveniles on East Coast main line wires at Plessey Hall (Cramlington) on 2nd (STH), Druridge pools on 7th, 14th and 17th (TF/JFa/TB/ASJ), Low Newton on 16th (AA) and at Holy Island from 20th until 28th (MJC/ADM).

**Barn Owl** *Tyto alba*

A pair with at least one fledged young was in a natural nest hole in Sycamore at Humshaugh (SW). One hunted at Rothbury on 9th (TRD/JD) and at Cresswell Pond on 22nd/23rd (STH/IFo/AJ).



A Cuckoo

Druridge

Chris Barlow



### **Little Owl** *Athene noctua*

In the Druridge area an adult and juvenile were seen regularly till 21st with singles also on many occasions and noted hunting at Shiremoor on three evenings during the month.



A little Owl on a Druridge fence  
14th August by Jonathan Farooqi

### **Tawny Owl** *Strix aluco*

Two called regularly during the month and at Cupola Bridge on 14th (EC/SW). One was heard regularly from mid-month at Waren Caravan Park (Budle Bay) (GPK) and at Lynnshield on 14th, Kirkhill (Morpeth) on 22nd, Milkwell (Corbridge) on 23rd, Chevington Moor and West Chevington on 27th and Wark (N.Tyne) on 30th.

### **Short-eared Owl** *Asio flammeus*

One was at Holy Island on 14th (SR/AH).

### **Swift** *Apus apus*

On 14th 70 were still on territory at Hillheads (Whitley Bay) with 25 there on 16th (ASJ), 50+ at Shiremoor on 2nd (CGK), 45 at Lynemouth on 21st, 30 at Ellington on 15th (TB) and 22 at East Ord (Berwick) on 21st (MHu). 20 were at Alnwick on 12th, 15 at Morpeth on 5th, 12 at Humshaugh on 7th and ten at Whitley Bay on 15th with one to eight at ten other locations the last one at Cresswell on 30th.

### **Kingfisher** *Alcedo atthis*

Two the peak count at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN), all other sightings singles at Budle Bay all month, Cresswell Pond and various locations from Low Angerton to estuary on R.Wansbeck on numerous occasions (TB/IRD/STH/IFo/TD). One was at Bolam Lake on 16th, Branton Ponds and County Hall (Morpeth) on 17th, Whittle Dene Res. on 22nd and Rothbury on 27th.

**Green Woodpecker** *Picus viridis*

One calling all month and visiting a garden at Rothbury (TRD), a juvenile at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 1st (SR), heard at Hexham on 3rd (AJH) and at Harwood Forest on 27th (STE).

**Great Spotted Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos major*

Five was the high count at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) (TB), one to two seen virtually every day in an Old Hartley garden (RJP), pairs at Shildon Cottage (Blanchland) on 11th, Rothbury riverside on 29th with two at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 13th and Ellington on 27th (JMA/DM/TB). Singles were at Annitsford, Arcot Pond and Valley Park (Cramlington).

**Kestrel** *Falco tinnunculus*

A male and two fledged young were at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 30th (TB) while two birds were noted at Plenmeller Common on 3rd and at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 31st (PRM). Singles were at Blyth, Cresswell Pond, East Chevington, Ellington, Grindon Lough, Lyneburn Flash, Newmoor (Ashington), Newton Flash, North Blyth, Red Row, West Chevington and Whittonstall.

**Merlin** *Falco columbarius*

A 1st-year bird was at Cresswell Pond on 18th (ASH/MN/TW) while a juvenile male was at The Snook (Holy Island) on several dates (MJC) and a male was near Bellingham on 31st (AJR).

**Hobby** *Falco subbuteo*

At Gosforth Park NR an un-aged bird was disturbed from a perch in the evening by a Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus* and then chased from the reserve by Common Terns *Sterna hirundo* on 10th (NHSN). Another un-aged bird was seen flying across the road at Gowk Hill (Rothbury) on 13th (JD).

**Peregrine** *Falco peregrinus*

The two adults present last month in Budle Bay (CGK/GPK) were still present throughout August (CGK/GPK *et al.*). Single birds were at an inland site and at Derwent Reservoir while birds were on or near the coast at Budle Bay, Cresswell Pond, Holy Island, Newbiggin, North Blyth and Seaton Sluice.



A Peregrine at Newbiggin by Colin Bradshaw

**Red-backed Shrike** *Lanius collurio*

One was at Howdon on 29th (CB).

**Magpie** *Pica pica*

On 5th eight at Borewell (Scremerston) (MHu), six at Jesmond Dene on 30th one to two in an Old Hartley garden during the month and one at Gosforth on 10th.



**Jay** *Garrulus glandarius*

A group of six at Harwood Village on 27th (STE), three juveniles at Gosforth on 10th (CDB), two juveniles at Ellington on 4th and two at Harwood Forest on 27th (TB/STE).

**Jackdaw** *Corvus monedula*

Around 500 were in a mixed flock with Rooks flying to roost at Dukeswood House (Hexham) on 29th (AJH), 120 at Flodden Field on 19th, 100 at Widdrington on 14th and Howick Scar on 22nd and 50 at Catton on 11th (JMA). One to 34 were at Dinnington, Jesmond Dene, Old Hartley and Plessey.

**Rook** *Corvus frugilegus*

Around 500 were in a mixed flock with Jackdaws flying to roost at Dukeswood House (Hexham) on 29th (AJH), 100 at Milfield on 18th/19th and Warkworth on 14th, 80 at Flodden fields on 19th, 50 at East Chevington on 4th, Morpeth & Christon Bank on 14th, Ulgham on 22nd (JMA) with one to 25 at Acklington, Old Hartley and Plessey.

**Carrion Crow** *Corvus corone*

A count of 20 at North Shields Fish Quay on 5th (JMA) with one to six at Gosforth, Jesmond Dene and Old Hartley.

**Raven** *Corvus corax*

Two at Wooler Common on 17th and College Valley on 18th (JMA).

**Goldcrest** *Regulus regulus*

17 first-year birds and two adults were ringed at Corbridge Common during the month (DLe) with two at Bamburgh on 10th, Beal Point/Longbridge End on 26th and Valley Park (Cramlington) on 27th (BRS/DM/MJC). Singles were at Holy Island on two dates, Valley Park (Cramlington) and Brandling Park, Exhibition Park, Robinson Library (Newcastle).

**Blue Tit** *Cyanistes caeruleus*

Two of 13 were ringed at Hauxley on 27th (HRS), three to five in an Old Hartley garden during the month, five in Holywell Dene on 27th (RJP) and one in Jesmond Dene on 23rd.

**Great Tit** *Parus major*

Ten at Holywell Dene on 27th (RJP), eight ringed at Hauxley on the same date (HRS), two to six in an Old Hartley garden during the month (RJP) and four in Jesmond Dene on 30th (MJCo).

**Coal Tit** *Periparus ater*

Just one to two in an Old Hartley garden and two at Jesmond Dene on 30th (RJP/MJCo).

**Willow Tit** *Poecile montanus*

Two at County Hall (Morpeth) on 17th and Ellington on 18th (MJC/TB) with singles on five dates in an Old Hartley garden, two dates at Blyth GC the first record here in eight years for the observer (SJL), at Druridge Bay CP, Newton Pool and Prestwick Carr.

**Marsh Tit** *Poecile palustris*

All sightings from Linden Hall (Longhorsley) with two on 21st and singles on 13th and 15th (NFO).

**Skylark** *Alauda arvensis*

Fields at St Mary's Island held 11 on 25th and only one remained at an upland breeding site at Simonside on 27th (ASJ).

**Sand Martin** *Riparia riparia*

On 19th 80 were at Brenkley (PCF), 50 at Hauxley on 12th and St Mary's Island on 24th (HRS/ASJ), 35 (mostly juveniles) on wires at Holystone (Coquetdale) on 27th (ASJ) and one to eight at Arcot Pond, Howdon and Monks' House Pool.

**Swallow** *Hirundo rustica*

The hirundine roost at Gosforth Park NR varied widely during the month but peaked at around 2,000 on 15th & 17th (NHSN). 150 were on lines at Brunton Bridge on 23rd, 100 at Howick Hall on 30th (JMA), 80 at Prestwick Carr on 21st (PCF), 70 at Amble on 22nd (HRS), 65 at Holystone (Coquetdale) on 27th (ASJ) and 50 at Plenmeller Common on 3rd (PRM). 25-34 were at Hauxley, Holywell Dene, Town Moor (Newcastle) and Whitley Bay with four to 20 at thirteen other locations. Moderate passage was noted on 31st at Druridge Pools of 100/h (MSH).

**House Martin** *Delichon urbica*

Around 70, including many juveniles, gathered on the church tower at Stamfordham on 31st (EC), 64 in a tight feeding flock at East Ord (Berwick) on 24th (MHu), 24 at Cresswell Village on 27th and 22 at Old Hartley on 30th (ASJ). 14-20 were at Cramlington, Great Tosson, Holystone (Coquetdale) and Holywell Dene with two to 12 at four other locations. Late breeding was noted at Southfield Green (Cramlington) with 2nd brood fledging on 27th (DM).

A House Martin

Cresswell

Alan Jack

**Long-tailed Tit** *Aegithalos caudatus*

Family parties were noted at Exhibition Park and Leazes Park on 2nd and 8th respectively (DM/GB). Counts of 12 came from Cramlington (Valley Park) on 21st and Holywell Dene on 27th and 11 were at Howdon on 19th. Elsewhere, seven were at Marden Quarry, five at Grindon Lough and two at Jesmond Dene (Heaton Park Wood).

**Chiffchaff** *Phylloscopus collybita*

A total of ten were ringed at Corbridge Common during the month (DLe). Six were at Craster on 30th, three at Bamburgh on 10th and two at Berwick (Pier House) on 23rd and Berwick (Yarrow Heugh) on 2nd, East Chevington on 4th, Exhibition Park on 2nd and Howick Haven on 21st. Singles were noted at a further six Localities.

**Willow Warbler** *Phylloscopus trochilus*

Light passage at Holy Island included eight on 20th, 11 on 25th and 30 on 28th (TF/JFa/MJC/ADM). Elsewhere along the coast ten+ were at Tynemouth on 23rd, 20 at St Mary's Island on 24th, 15 at Hauxley RS on 27th and four to seven at Cresswell Pond, Newbiggin GC and Whitley Bay (Rockcliffe) during the same period. Inland a total of 18 were caught and ringed at Mickley Square on 20th (DLe). One to three were reported from a further four coastal and six inland localities.

**Blackcap** *Sylvia atricapilla*

Three were at Howick Haven on 30th (MJC), two at Bamburgh on 10th and singles at Derwent Reservoir on 18th, Druridge Pools on 14th, Exhibition Park on 18th and Thrunton Woods on 28th.

**Garden Warbler** *Sylvia borin*

Three were at Cresswell Pond on 22nd (STH/IFo) and singles at St Mary's Wetland on 21st, Waren Mill on 27th and Howick Haven on 30th.

**Barred Warbler** *Sylvia nisoria*

The first autumn arrival was a first-winter at Holy Island (Snook) on 20th (MJC).

**Lesser Whitethroat** *Sylvia curruca*

A family party of five was at Hethpool (College Valley) on 6th (JD). Singles were also noted at Backworth on 24th and at Swallow Pond on 7th.

**Whitethroat** *Sylvia communis*

Four family groups, totalling around 20 birds were at St Mary's Island on 3rd (ASJ). Counts of two came from Cocklawburn on 5th, Derwent Reservoir on 18th, East Chevington on 4th and Holy Island on 25th. At the latter locality singles were noted on 19th and 28th, while further singles were at Brown's Bay on 25th and Holywell Dene on 18th.

**Grasshopper Warbler** *Locustella naevia*

The regular survey in the Cramlington area produced a minimum of 29 territories (up to 35) in 2016, including 13 (max.15) at Arcot Pond and nine (max.12) at West Hartford (STH/GMi/DM/LJM).

During August, singles were noted in two different territories at West Hartford on 5th, with further singles at Arcot Pond on 18th (juvenile calling for food), 27th and 31st, Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 6th, Cresswell Pond on 9th, East Chevington on 29th and Prestwick Carr on 1st.

**Icterine Warbler** *Hippolais icterina*

The first autumn arrival was a first-winter at Cresswell Pond on 21st (MJC).





**Sedge Warbler** *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

A total of 89 were ringed at East Chevington during the month, with peaks of 47 on 5th and 19 on 29th (IF). A pair were feeding young at Holy Island (Snook) on 3rd, while one to three were also reported from Backworth, Bamburgh, Berwick (Needles Eye), Cocklawburn, Cresswell Pond, St Mary's Wetland and Swallow Pond.



A Sedge Warbler on Holy Island Snook  
by Mike Carr on 3rd August

**Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

A total of 63 were ringed at East Chevington during the month, with peaks of 20 on 5th and 19 on 26th (IF). The peak count from Gosforth Park NR was four, while two adults fed two fledged young at Ladyburn Lake on 16th. At St Mary's Wetland, a pair were feeding young in the nest on 12th and an adult was feeding two fledged young on 16th (MSH/ASJ); two + were noted here on 26th. Two were at Holywell Pond on 1st and at Cresswell Pond on 21st and 27th, with singles also reported from Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 1st and Holy Island on 28th.

**Nuthatch** *Sitta europaea*

One to three were reported from Cramlington (Beacon Lane), Ellington, Exhibition Park, Ford Village, Jesmond Dene, Simonburn, Wark (North Tyne) and Wooler Common.

**Treecreeper** *Certhia familiaris*

Singles were noted at Jesmond Dene, Wallington and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

**Wren** *Troglodytes troglodytes*

A family party was at Cramlington (Valley Park) on 14th and singles were reported from Holywell Dene and Jesmond Dene.

**Starling** *Sturnus vulgaris*

An active flock of 600 adults and juveniles were on seaweed at Holy Island on 26th (TD). Elsewhere, flocks of 200-260 were noted at Druridge Bay CP, Grindon Lough and Seaton Sluice early in the month, 150 were at Berwick shore on 14th, 120 at Newbiggin on 24th, 95 at Cullercoats on 16th, 60+ near Exhibition Park on 2nd and ten to 50 at Alnwick, Chathill, East Chevington, Milfield, North Shields FQ, Tynemouth and Whitley Bay.

**Dipper** *Cinclus cinclus*

Three at Bywell Bridge on 9th was the only report (PCF).

**Blackbird** *Turdus merula*

Four to five were reported from Holywell Dene (RJP) and two at Jesmond Dene.

**Song Thrush** *Turdus philomelos*

Two at Barn's Park (Cramlington) on 27th and a single at Holywell Dene on 15th were the only reports.

**Mistle Thrush** *Turdus viscivorus*

The largest gatherings were 24 at Linden Hall on 14th (NFO) and 12 at Plessey Hall Farm (Cramlington) on 2nd. Seven were at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 5th and two at Derwent Reservoir on 3rd. An adult / adults were feeding a juvenile at Blagdon on 3rd and 5th.

**Spotted Flycatcher** *Muscicapa striata*

Successful breeding was confirmed at Stamfordham (adults + three fledged young-EC), Corbridge (four young), near Windyhaugh (adults + two fledged young), Linden Hall (adult + two fledged young), Haughton Castle (two juveniles) and Humshaugh (one juvenile). Elsewhere, two were at Druridge Pools on 22nd and singles at Exhibition Park on 16th, Ellington on 18th, and Holy Island on 19th, 25th and 28th, St Mary's Island on 21st, 24th and 26th-27th and Gosforth Park NR on 30th.

**Robin** *Erithacus rubecula*

One to four were reported from Hauxley RS, Holywell Dene, Howick Haven, Old Hartley and Jesmond Dene.

**Pied Flycatcher** *Ficedula hypoleuca*

Holy Island had one on 20th and ten on 28th (MJC/ADM). Singles were also noted at Newbiggin GC on 22nd, St Mary's Island on 24th, Druridge on 25th, Tynemouth on 26th and Budle Point on 28th.

**Redstart** *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Two were inland at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 1st and at Doddington (juveniles) on 3rd. Two were at Hadston Carrs on 24th and singles were reported from Holywell Dene on 9th, Druridge Pools on 21st-22nd and at Holy Island on 25th and 28th.

**Whinchat** *Saxicola rubetra*

At St Mary's Island, four were noted on 18th-20th, three on 21st and 24th and one on 26th (TF/JFa/ASJ *et.al.*). Three were at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 20th and singles at Beal Point on 26th, Budle Point on 11th, Hadston Carrs on 24th, Holy Island on 14th and Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 1st and 15th.

**Stonechat** *Saxicola rubicola*

A family party of four was at Budle Bay throughout (CGK/GPK) and four juveniles were at St Mary's Island on 20th (ASJ); juveniles were also noted at Holy Island, Howick Haven, Low Newton (two) and North Blyth. Three birds were at Druridge Pools on 5th, a pair at East Chevington on 4th and two at North Blyth on 20th. Single males were reported from Branxton and Simonburn.

**Wheatear** *Oenanthe oenanthe*

11 at Corsenside Common (Bellingham) on 31st probably related to two family parties (ASJ). Six to seven were at Derwent Reservoir on 3rd-4th and 12th. On the coast, nine were noted at Boulmer on 29th and five to six at Holy Island from 26th-28th. Elsewhere four were at Beal Point on 26th, Plenmeller Common on 3rd and St Mary's Island on 24th and one to two at a further nine coastal and eight inland localities.



A Wheatear on Holy Island on 3rd August by Mike Carr

**Dunnoek** *Prunella modularis*

The only reports were of three in Jesmond Dene and one in Holywell Dene this month.



**House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus*

Numbers building at St Mary's and in Holywell Village during the month, with stubble at the former attracting around 210-220 birds, many of which were juveniles. 90+ in bushes on the island itself may have been part of this gathering. 70-80 gathered at Holywell( ASJ *et al.*). 31 in Cramlington and 22 at Prestwick Carr during August (PCF). Eight were on garden feeders at Tynemouth on 30th and Old Hartley on many dates.

**Tree Sparrow** *Passer montanus*

70 at Haughton Strother on 13th was the month's largest gathering (SW), along with 65-70 counted at Chugdon Wood on 26th and 30th (TB). 25+ were at Waren Mill Caravan Park throughout the month (GPK). One to three noted at five further sites.

**Yellow Wagtail** *Motacilla flava/ flavissima*

Eight juveniles and an adult were seen at Whittle Dene on 1st (SR). Four were at Lynemouth Flash on 8th and three at Cresswell Pond on 4th and 22nd and flying S at St Mary's on 29th (CB/TRD/JD/ASJ). Three juveniles were at Derwent Reservoir on 1st, with single birds moving through on four other dates (IFo). Two were at Budle point on 14th and Backworth on 24th (CGK). One or two were at eight further sites during August.

**Grey Wagtail** *Motacilla cinerea*

Seven were at Whittle Dene on 1st and 22nd (SR). Three were seen in Jesmond Dene on 17th (MJCo). Singles also seen at 15 widespread sites from Kielder to St Mary's Island.

**Pied Wagtail** *Motacilla alba Yarrellii*

A good count of 51 was made on 25th at Bothal Pond (Tfa/JFa). 45+ were noted at Backworth on 24th (CGK). 24-30 were at St Mary's, Whittle Dene and at Beal Point in the last week of the month (ASJ/SR/MJC). One-12 were seen at seven further sites, including a family party at Exhibition Park, Newcastle and six birds on Town Moor (DM).

**Tree pipit** *Anthus trivialis*

Migrants were observed at the coast, with singles on Holy Island on 25th and over St. Mary's, calling the following day (MJC/MHS).

**Meadow Pipit** *Anthus pratensis*

Southbound migration began with 20 birds gathering on Newcastle Town Moor on 2nd, increasing to 30 by 10th (DM). 38 birds were counted passing Gosforth Garden Village in two hours on the morning of 30th and 127 the following day (MJC). A minimum of 50 in a loose feeding flock were noted at Derwent Reservoir on 15th (IFo). 12-35+ arrived ahead of a shower at Holy Island on 20th (DM *et al.*/MJC). Small flocks were also noted moving off moorland breeding areas in central Northumberland, gathering on lower ground on 27th, with ten+ still on territory at Simonside (ASJ). Ten also remained in College Valley on 18th (JMA).

**Rock Pipit** *Anthus petrosus*

Six including a juvenile were noted throughout the month at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay)(IJ/ASJ). Four fed on the beaches at St Mary's on 12th and 31st, two were at Hauxley on 27th and one at Berwick Little Beach on 23rd (ASJ/IRD/TRD/JD).

**Chaffinch** *Fringilla coelebs*

Poorly recorded this month with three in Holywell Dene and a single in Jesmond Dene the only reports.

**Bullfinch** *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

11 were ringed at Corbridge Common during August (DLe). Four were noted at Holywell Dene and at Howdon on 31st (ASJ/CB). Two were at Beacon Lane and Whitelea Chase (Cramlington) and singles at three other sites.

**Greenfinch** *Carduelis chloris*

12+ were feeding on rosehips at St Mary's on several dates during the month and four were at feeders in a Marden Estate garden all month (ASJ). A single in an Old Hartley garden was the only other report.

**Linnet** *Carduelis cannabina*

A flock of 400 at Newton Point on 4th was the month's maximum count (SW), with 320+ still in the area on 6th (ASJ). 130 were in a Rape field at Ellington on 1st (TB). 30 on 3rd increased to 71 birds at Derwent Reservoir on 27th (IFo/PRM). 50 were at Milkwell (Corbridge) on 21st (RB/MB). Two to 26 were at five further locations during the month.



A Linnet at east Chevington by Chris Barlow

**Lesser Redpoll** *Carduelis caberet*

12 were seen at Grindon on 31st with singles there on two other dates (PRM). Two+ on 1st at Dancing Green Hill was the only other report (MHS).

**Crossbill** *Loxia curvirostra*

36 were at Thrunton Woods on 14th (MJC), with a pair seen there on 17th (JMA). 20 noted in a four-hour period at Harwood on 27th (STE). 13 flew over Corbridge Common on 29th (DLe) and 12 were seen at Craggside on 12th (MJC). Two flew over the observer's house in Cramlington on 10th (STH) and a single seen at Blakehopeburnhaugh (Kielder) on 17th.

**Goldfinch** *Carduelis carduelis*

Large flocks gathered with 150+ at Backworth on 24th and at Gloucester Lodge (Blyth) on 30th (CGK/ASJ). 100-110 were at St Mary's on 26th (MHS/ASJ). 50 were at Northumberlandia (Cramlington) on 4th (STH). 30 were at Ellington on 1st and at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) (TB/DM). One to 15 were at a further seven sites.

**Siskin** *Carduelis spinus*

The only report was of a single at Linden Hall on 29th (NFO).

**Yellowhammer** *Emberiza citronella*

15+ were at Dancing Green Hill on 1st (MHS). Seven at Whittle Dene on same date, with a single there on 31st (SR/PRM). Singing males were noted with two at Holywell on 10th, four at Ogle on 11th and finally one at Halton on 14th (ASJ/SW).

**Reed Bunting** *Emberiza schoeniclus*

There were three reports this month with four singing at Low Newton on 6th and three birds at St Mary's on several dates (ASJ). Three were at Arcot on 28th (DM).

**ESCAPES, HYBRIDS AND BIRDS OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN**

**Escapes**

**Black Swan** *Cygnus atratus*

The adult on the Tweed Estuary remained all month again (MHu). One was also noted again at Shield on the Wall dam on 25th and 26th (PRM).

**Bar-headed Goose** *Anser indicus*

One of these regularly occurring escapes was seen at the Tweed Estuary on 18th (MHu) with four at Hauxley on 20th (DM / GB / LAR).

**Hybrids**

**Canada Goose x Greylag Goose** *Branta canadensis* x *Anser anser*

Four were noted at Bothal Pond on 29th (TF / JFa) and three at Hauxley on 12th (HRS).



## LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

A.Allen, J.M.Almond, C.D.Barlow, R.J. & M.Bentley, T.Blake, J.S.Booth, G Bowman, C.Bradshaw, M.J.Carr, M.J.Cook (MJCo), E.Crabtree, T.Daley, T.R. & J.Dean, I.R.Douglas, S.T.Elliott, J.Farooqi (JFa), T.Farooqi, I.Fisher, P.C.Fletcher, I.Forsyth (IFo), H.Galley, A.Hall, C.D.Hampton, M.Hepple (Mhp), A.J.Hewitt, M.S.Hodgson, S.T.Holliday, M.Hutcheson (MHu), A.S.Jack, A.Janes, I.Johnson, C.G.Knox, G.P.Knox, S.J.Laing, D.Leat (DLe), J.Littlewood, P.R.Massey, L.J.Mcdougall D.McKeown, G.Milward (GMi), A.D.Mould, N.F.Osborne, R.J.Pannell, S.P.Parnaby, A.J.Richards, S.Rippon, I.D.Robson, J.G.Steele, D.R.Watson, T.Watson, S.Westerberg, T.Wiffen (TWi), K.W.York.

Bamburgh Ringing Society, Hauxley Ringing Station, Natural History Society of Northumbria, Seaton Sluice Watch Tower.  
Berwick Wildlife Group, Natural History Society of Northumbria, Seaton Sluice Watch Tower.

## Apologies for any accidental omissions

## BULLETIN COMPILATION AND PRODUCTION

This bulletin was compiled by Graeme Bowman (Mute Swan to Ruddy Duck), Steve Laing (Red Grouse to Black-necked Grebe), Trevor Blake (Honey-buzzard to Crane), Tom Brewis (Avocet to Godwit), Clive Hampton (Turnstone to Skua), Eddie Crabtree (Puffin to Great Black-backed Gull), Tim Dean (Escapes, Hybrids and Unknown Origin, List of Contributors, Highlights), Peter Fletcher (Feral Pigeon to Red-rumped Swallow), Mike Richardson (Cetti's Warbler to Pied Flycatcher), Alan Jack (Dunnock to Corn Bunting), Kathy Evans (WeBS Coastal Counts) and Steve Holliday (WeBS Inland Counts).

Data Manager is Tom Brewis

Thanks to David Sanders of NNBC for providing data.

Proof reading was by Mike Smith.

Mail distribution by Paul Stewart.

Edited by Steve Barrett [NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com](mailto:NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com)

## RECORD SUBMISSION

Please email records for the month to [ntbc.records@googlemail.com](mailto:ntbc.records@googlemail.com)

Please email for a copy of the standard spreadsheet and other details.

Location names and grid references: Please use of standard location names and include grid references as this greatly increases the value of records in subsequent analyses. A 1km square grid reference is the ideal e.g. NY8067 for Grindon Lough, but 2km square references (tetrads) are also acceptable e.g. NY86D in this case. A list of localities and their tetrad grid references (tetrad/Locality List) can be downloaded from the 'Resources & Downloads' section of the Club website at <http://www.ntbc.org.uk> – the use of these names, wherever possible, would be highly appreciated.

Could club members ensure they to submit records direct to NTBC rather than just Birdtrack. There may be an assumption by some members this happens automatically. We do not want to miss records.

## PHOTOGRAPHS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Please keep submitting your articles, photographs, sketches and illustrations for the bulletin. Thanks again to those who have supplied the excellent photographs. Please send to Steve Barrett at [NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com](mailto:NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com)

It is preferable if you re-size your photos before sending and a suggested size is 640 x 480 pixels. Please ensure you include the following information with your submissions: name, species, date taken, locality.

Photographs will not be used elsewhere without the photographer's permission.

## MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Annual membership costs £10 for a junior, £30 for an individual, and £32 for a family.

For membership enquiries please contact [ntbc@jobentley.plus.com](mailto:ntbc@jobentley.plus.com)

Membership subscriptions were due at the beginning of October. If you internet bank you can pay online: please include your name in the ref. It is helpful if you email me to let me know when you've made the transfer [ntbc@jobentley.plus.com](mailto:ntbc@jobentley.plus.com)

If you decide to set up a standing order please date the first payment at least a fortnight from your posting date to allow time to process with the bank. You can also set up your standing order directly with your bank if you wish; just let me know.

Finally, if you know anyone who might like to join NTBC please pass on the club information - new members are always welcome.

## Jo Bentley - Hon Treasurer

## NTBC AGM

The Club Annual General Meeting will be held on 8th October before the Indoor Meeting.

## NTBC WEB SITE

The Club website is an excellent resource for all interested in birds in the north-east. There are numerous interesting sections, including a photograph gallery, site information and trip reports together with extensive reference information for birding in our area. Please submit any new content for the website to the main club email address.

## NTBC SIGHTINGS PAGE

The Sightings Page contains current reports by members. Access is from the NTBC website and an email notification is

available for new postings. Members need to submit a email address they wish to post from before they can

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request to be added to the website, specifying the submit sightings to [ntbcorg@gmail.com](mailto:ntbcorg@gmail.com)

### COUNTY RECORDS COMMITTEE

Gary Woodburn will complete his four-year spell on the committee in December 2016. Hence there will be a vacancy on the CRC to be filled. Please could anyone wishing to apply to join the committee let the County Recorder Tim Dean know, either by email or letter. Applicants need to have a comprehensive knowledge of Northumberland's birdlife and will be required to attend three meetings a year to verify sightings in the county. It is envisaged that applicants will need to access online documents and have email access. A brief resume of birding credentials and experience should be forwarded when applying. This year there will be a cut-off date for applications of 15th November.

Tim Dean  
2, Knocklaw Park  
Rothbury  
NE65 7PW  
email : [t.r.dean@btinternet.com](mailto:t.r.dean@btinternet.com)

### NEW WeBS COUNTER

A new WeBS (Wetland Bird Survey) counter is required urgently for both Colt Crag and Hallington Reservoirs, around 10 miles north of Hexham. The commitment required is a monthly count of all the waterbirds present at the two sites during September to March each year. An on-site introduction can be arranged.

If interested, please contact Steve Holliday on 07786 213699 or email at [steveholliday@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:steveholliday@hotmail.co.uk)

### NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

The weekly Natural History Society of Northumbria talks programme at Great North Museum: Hancock starts soon. In particular we have John Calladine from BTO Scotland talking about his work on Short-eared Owls on Friday 7th Oct and Prof. Nick Davies from Cambridge University talking about his 20-year work on Cuckoos on 2 Dec. All our talks start at 7pm.

Full details at <http://www.nhsn.ncl.ac.uk/activities/talks-field-trips-events-activities/>

I will be leaving NHSN on 22 Nov to take up a new job in Cambridge. We are advertising for a new Director, closing date is 12 Oct and details can be found at <http://www.nhsn.ncl.ac.uk/join-us/jobs-and-careers/>

James Littlewood

Natural History Society of Northumbria

### OPTICS FOR SALE

Swarovski EL 10 x42 binoculars, old model, very good condition. £990 o.n.o.

For Sale Canon 50D SLR camera and Sigma 150-500 mm zoom lens. Camera in very good condition, lens well used but in good working order. £450 o.n.o.

Tel. 07739 070669 or 01670 788395.

Thanks

Neil Osborne

**STILL LIFE** a new exhibition by Sally Madge at the Old Low Light, North Shields Fish Quay.

The work on show weaves various narratives around the plight of seabirds and their endeavours to adjust to changes in the physical environment caused by human activity and the resulting devastating global processes. Humour and pathos as well as a touch of surrealism are combined in visual scenarios using a range of objects, materials and media, including preserved sea birds, plastic beach debris, children's action figures and scale models as well as performance on film. Viewers are invited to develop the story lines implicit in the work.

Exhibition opening evening Thursday 27th October, from 6:30 - 8:30 pm, there will be a short presentation ('Talking rubbish') around 7 pm. Bird club members are welcome. Please confirm exact times beforehand by checking the Old Low Light website [www.oldlowlight.co.uk](http://www.oldlowlight.co.uk) The exhibition will likely continue to run into January 2017.

'Talking rubbish' a short presentation on 27th Oct 2016 at the Old Low Light (see above), around 7 pm. The 'Save the North Sea' fulmar project has been running since 2002. This work aims to monitor the cleanliness of the North Sea and seeks long-term improvement. The speaker, Dan Turner, has been involved in the project since 2003 and is the northeast England coordinator.

Dan Turner is also launching his new book '**Life on the Tyne**' on Saturday, 29th October at the Old Low Light, North Shields fish quay. He will give a short presentation around 2 pm. (see [www.whitewingspublishing.co.uk](http://www.whitewingspublishing.co.uk))



**COASTAL WeBS COUNTS: NORTHUMBERLAND**

			TB	T. Brewis		MLC	M. L. Cadwallender/W. Dickson		MGA	M. G. Anderson								
<b>JULY</b>	<b>2016</b>		AC	A. Craggs		JAR	J. Roper/W Banks		LJM	L. J. McDougall		DMT	D. M. Turner					
			MHu	M. Hutcheson		TAC	T. A. Cadwallender		SP	S. Pamaby		PF	P. Fletcher					
Site	TOTAL	<i>Berwick North Shore (including Little Beach)</i>	<i>Tweed Estuary</i>	<i>Spital - Cocklawburn</i>	<i>Tweed: A1 By Pass to Gainslaw House</i>	<i>Whiteadder Water</i>	<i>Lindisfarne NNR (including Budle Bay)</i>	<i>Seahouses - Beadnell</i>	<i>Howick - Boulmer</i>	<i>Aln Estuary</i>	<i>Cresswell - Newbiggin</i>	<i>Blyth Estuary</i>	<i>St Mary's Island</i>	<i>Tyne North Pier - Fish Quay</i>	<i>East Howdon, (north bank only)</i>	<i>Redheugh - Sodswood Bridge (north bank)</i>	<i>Sodswood - Newburn Bridge (north bank)</i>	
Counter		MHu	MHu	MHu	TB	TB	AC	AC	MLC	JAR	TAC	MGA	LJM	SP	DMT	DMT	PF	PF
Date		22	21	25	23	22	24	24	13	25	21	23	24	10	29	30	24	24
Little Grebe	1					1												
Cormorant	195	9	16	21	2	1	32		22	7	4		46		19	14	2	
Shag	38	14		8			4		12									
Little Egret	14						13			1								
Grey Heron	79	5	11	1	4	10	11		7	11	8		1	3		6	1	
Mute Swan	305		282		2	4	2				5		6			2	2	
Whooper Swan	4		4															
Pink-footed Goose	2		2															
Greylag Goose	15		5				5				5							
Canada Goose	110		62								41		7					
Light-bellied Brent Goose	2						2											
Shelduck	205						104	80		11	6		1			1	2	
Teal	47						47											
Mallard	172		18		56	24	10				22			4			6	32
Shoveler	2						2											
Tufted Duck	4			1			3											
Eider	712	7		82			219		168	33	8	158	12	20	5			
Common Scoter	12						5			7								
Velvet Scoter	2									2								
Red-breasted Merganser	18						17	1										
Goosander	489	143	182	92	6	23	6		1		2		34					
Moorhen	26					3	3				18			2				
Coot	6						2				4							
Oystercatcher	650	42	22	26	1		240	70	64	32	104	7	26	10	5		1	
Ringed Plover	15						7		1				6		1			
Golden Plover	218						13			64		1		140				
Lapwing	577		3	86			21				275					1	184	7
Knot	82						55					27						
Sanderling	82						22					60						
Dunlin	1,156	16					1053					38	49					
Snipe	2						2											
Black-tailed Godwit	1			1														
Bar-tailed Godwit	168	1					164	3										
Whimbrel	21						17			2	2							
Curlew	1,685	16	144	3			1103	50	13	86	213		38	8	3	2	4	2
Redshank	1,163		18	2	1		791	75	8	19	96	4	106	4	5	8	26	
Greenshank	3						1				2							
Common Sandpiper	14		1		2		1				7			1				2
Turnstone	86	2					29		4	1		36	9		5			
Black-headed Gull	5,446	50	336	110	72	4	3326	50	41	93	335		457		35	124	302	111
Common Gull	78	14		2	2		44			3	12				1			
Lesser Black-backed Gull	130		7				23	18	2				18				55	7
Herring Gull	2,511	72	710	22	2	14	533	70	96	59	67		390		364		108	4
Great Black-backed Gull	96	2	7	1			12	10	16	13	1		1		31		2	
Kittiwake	640	23	340						272						4	1		
Mediterranean Gull	6												4		2			
Sandwich Tern	341	16	14	85			79		1	26	3		7		110			
Roseate Tern	8										2	5			1			
Common Tern	107						15				58		12		6	16		
Arctic Tern	466			4			449		1	1	11							
Little Tern	23						18		5									
Kingfisher	2				2													
<b>ADDITIONAL SPECIES</b>																		
Fulmar	3	1							2									
Gannet	32								27	5								
Guillemot	2								2									
<b>TOTALS - WILDFOWL</b>	<b>2,460</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>582</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>487</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>- WADERS</b>	<b>5,923</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3,519</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>699</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>234</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>- GULLS &amp; TERNS</b>	<b>9,852</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>1,414</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>4,499</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>434</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>489</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>885</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>554</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>467</b>	<b>122</b>

COASTAL WeBS COUNTS: NORTHUMBERLAND														
			MLC	M. L. Cadwallender / W. Dickson		LJM	L. J. McDougall				DMT	D. M. Turner		
<b>AUGUST</b>	<b>2016</b>		TB	T. Brewis		MGA	M. G. Anderson				SP	S. Parnaby		
			MHu	M. Hutcheson		KAE	K. A. Evans				PF	P. Fletcher		
Site	TOTAL	Berwick North Shore (including Little Beach)	Tweed Estuary	Spittal to Cocklawburn	Tweed: A1 By-Pass to Gainslaw House	Whiteadder Water	Budle Pt. - Seahouses	Seahouses - Beadnell	Cresswell - Newbiggin	Blyth Estuary	St Mary's Island	Tyne North Pier - Fish Quay	Redheugh - Scotswood Bridge, (north bank)	Scotswood - Newburn Bridge, (north bank)
Counter		MHu	MHu	MHu	TB	TB	KAE	MLC	MGA	LJM	SP	DMT	PF	PF
Date		17	18	15	15	15	26	12	22	23	16	30	21	21
Little Grebe	1					1								
Cormorant	161	32	14				2	19	16	17	15	45	1	
Shag	32	30						1			1			
Grey Heron	38		20		7	3	1	2	2		3			
Mute Swan	420	1	406	2	5	2		1		2				1
Whooper Swan	2		2											
Canada Goose	29		22							7				
Shelduck	10								9	1				
Teal	58	26									32			
Mallard	104		26		15	8		2			5		18	30
Tufted Duck	1										1			
Eider	308	15	5	92			65	70	33	15	12	1		
Common Scoter	96			96										
Goosander	184	24	116	2	3	3		4		32				
Moorhen	5			1	1	2					1			
Coot	1										1			
Oystercatcher	764	22	12	77			33	136	244	90	102	48		
Ringed Plover	280	54	8	6			5	81	107	5	12	1		1
Golden Plover	92	2						4	40		46			
Lapwing	211		64								22		24	101
Knot	7	1					2		2	2				
Sanderling	99						3		16		80			
Curlew Sandpiper	1								1					
Purple Sandpiper	102						102							
Dunlin	198	26	12				2		128	27	3			
Black-tailed Godwit	17									17				
Bar-tailed Godwit	1		1											
Whimbrel	5	3		1							1			
Curlew	274	42	66	16				19	23	18	81	4	4	1
Redshank	530	144	126	8			26	25	14	124	50	11		2
Greenshank	3		2								1			
Common Sandpiper	2				1					1				
Turnstone	227	14	5	3			145	33	3	7	10	7		
Black-headed Gull	1,462	11	488	83	97	5	101	67		245		88	210	67
Common Gull	43	1	28	2	10		1							1
Lesser Black-backed Gull	82		2		1		1	3		44		2	23	6
Herring Gull	2,112	86	620	58	5	4	67	143		135		896	83	15
Great Black-backed Gull	166	5	10				17	13				121		
Kittiwake	238		64					163				11		
Mediterranean Gull	2								1		1			
Sandwich Tern	199	4	12	102			43	7		25		6		
Common Tern	123									35		88		
Arctic Tern	11			6				2				3		
Kingfisher	1					1								
<b>ADDITIONAL SPECIES</b>														
Guillemot	2			2										
Gannet	11							11						
Fulmar	2			1				1						
Black Swan	1			1										
<b>TOTALS - WILDFOWL</b>	<b>1,450</b>	128	611	193	31	19	68	99	60	74	71	46	19	31
- WADERS	<b>2,813</b>	308	296	111	1	0	318	298	578	291	408	71	28	105
- GULLS & TERNS	<b>4,438</b>	107	1,224	251	113	9	230	398	1	484	1	1,215	316	89







# Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

<http://www.ntbc.org.uk/>

Bulletin 2016 No 9

MONTHLY SUMMARY SEPTEMBER 2016

6th November 2016



## CONTENTS

WeBS Inland  
Books for Sale

## CLASSIFIED LIST HIGHLIGHTS

Great Shearwater	One passed N on the 17th and seen past St Mary's and Seaton Sluice.
Balaric Shearwater	Singles on 8th and 17th past Seaton Sluice.
Garganey -	Singles at Gosforth Park and Whittle Dene, surprisingly the only sightings.
Bittern	At least two at Gosforth Park all month.
Little Egret	High count of 20 at Cresswell Pond on 5th.
Great White Egret	Adult at Druridge Pools up to 10th and possibly the same at Gosforth Park on 8th.
Pallid Harrier	2nd county record with a juvenile seen and photographed on Holy Island on 15th.
White-rumped Sandpiper	Singles at Amble Harbour on 1st and Castle Island on 6th.
Wood Sandpiper	Only sighting was one at Bothal Pond.
Jack Snipe	Single at Gosforth Park
Franklin's Gull	2nd county record with an adult at Whittle Dene Reservoir from 16th.
Caspian Gull	Single first-winters at Blyth estuary and St Mary's plus the ringed adult at Amble Harbour.
Hobby	Only sighting was one at Leaplish at Kielder on 10th.
Lesser Grey Shrike	Interesting sighting of a ringed bird at Newton found to be captive bred in Spain.
Greenish Warbler	One in Vicar's Garden on Holy Island on 17th.
Rose-coloured Starling	Juvenile at Roseden from 21st to 29th.
Thrush Nightingale	One showed incredibly well at Sandham Bay on Holy Island on 18th.
Red-breasted Flycatcher	At least four individuals on Holy Island from 15th.

The juvenile Male Pallid Harrier

Holy Island

Mike Carr

15th September

## INDOOR MEETINGS

NTBC indoor meetings are held at Northern Rugby Club, McCracken Park, Great North Road, Newcastle, NE3 2DT starting at 7.00pm and generally finish between 9.00pm-9.30pm.

## 10th November 2016

**South East Scotland Bird Atlas – Mark Holling.** During the years 2007-13, the Lothian and Borders branches of the SOC conducted a tetrad atlas across all of south-east Scotland, with fieldwork in both the winter and breeding seasons, similar to the Northumbria Bird Atlas project. Mark was one of the organisers of the survey and is part of the team which have been analysing and documenting the results. He will present a selection of the findings, many of which are of high conservation interest and, being so close, comparable to the findings in Northumberland.



**CLASSIFIED LIST****Mute Swan** *Cygnus olor*

Peak counts were 128 at the Tweed Estuary on 15th (MHu), 101 at QEII CP Lake on 19th (CDH), 22-33 at Big Waters (GB) and East Chevington (SRB), and 17 at Amble. Seven to nine were also at Alnmouth, Bothal and Swallow Ponds, Newcastle Leazes Park and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

**Whooper Swan** *Cygnus cygnus*

The first returnees were nine adults at Budle Bay on 30th (TRD/JD/GPK).

**Pink-footed Goose** *Anser brachyrhynchus*

One at Budle Bay on 11th was described as a summering bird (CGK/GPK). At least one heard passing over Wark at 2330h on 15th (PRM) was followed by 22 at East Chevington on 17th (IRD), 167 S at Swallow Pond (SPP) and 25 at Budle Bay on 19th (CGK/GPK) when three large flocks were heard moving south over Berwick (MJC), 154 (in three skeins) S at Cocklawburn on 20th (MHu), and four at Low Newton on 21st (TRD/JD). Budle Bay held 400 on 22nd (CGK/GPK) when 80-110 flew S at East Chevington (IFo) and East Ord (MHu), and 55-80 flew S or W at Druridge Pools, Kenton and Tynemouth between 24th-26th. Heavy passage, involving many thousands, occurred at Holy Island between 28th-30th and included night passage at 2300h on 29th (IK). Numbers at Budle Bay increased to 1,700 by 28th and 2,100 on 30th (CGK/GPK), about 1,000 fed at Haggerston on 30th (IK) when 800 were at the Longbridge End area of Lindisfarne NNR (TRD/JD). A total of 57 flew N and 725 S at Seaton Sluice on 29th-30th (SSWT), and on 30th, 213-237 flew S at East Cramlington LNR (STH) and Tynemouth (SPP), 160 W at Rothbury (TRD/JD) and 132 were at Grindon Lough (PRM). Groups of 44-116 flew over, mainly S or W, at Cocklawburn, Derwent Reservoir, East Ord, Meadow Haven, North Seaton between 28th-30th, while birds were heard over Whitley Bay at night.

**Greylag Goose** *Anser anser*

15 flew S at Newcastle Exhibition Park on 26th (GB). Compared to Pink-footed Goose only moderate numbers were recorded; 310 were at Budle Bay on 10th (CGK/GPK), 250 at Derwent Reservoir on 4th (JMA), 118-166 at Arcot and Bothal Ponds (CDH/LJM), Branton GP (TD), the Tweed Estuary (MHu), Whittle Dene Reservoirs (SR) and Widdrington Moor Lake (AJR), and 53-85 at Big Waters and Linton Ponds. Nine to 16 were also at Grindon Lough and QEII CP Lake.

**Canada Goose** *Branta canadensis*

40 were at Branton GP on 1st (JMA), 27 at Newcastle Leazes Park on 1st (DM), and four at Arcot Pond.

**Barnacle Goose** *Branta leucopsis*

Two were at Bothal Pond on 6th (TD), one at QEII CP Lake on 19th (CDH) and 25 at Budle Bay on 26th (CGK/GPK).

**Brent Goose** *Branta bernicla*

Passage of pale-bellied *hrota* race birds involved 70 N at Newbiggin (GB/DM/STH) and 40 N at Tynemouth on 4th (DRW), 46 N at Seaton Sluice between 4th-19th, beginning with five N on 4th and including 24 N on 14th (SSWT), 17 N at Newbiggin on 17th (ASH), and five to eight at Snab Point and Tynemouth on 5th and 10th. At Lindisfarne NNR, 450 on 12th rose to about 1,500 by the end of the month (IK). Two Danish-ringed individuals were noted at Longbridge End, Lindisfarne NNR on 17th. Interestingly, another marked bird there had been ringed in Dublin in April 2016; a member of the 'East Canadian High Arctic' flyway population and unusual for our area (GB).

Reports of un-raced birds included 45 N at Howick on 4th (JR), and five to eight at Cresswell and Newbiggin on 4th and 18th.

**Shelduck** *Tadorna tadorna*

Seven moved N and six S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). At Budle Bay numbers rose from 17 on 1st to 123 by 23rd and 213 by 25th (CGK/GPK). Three were at Bothal Pond on 6th (TD) and at Castle Island on 9th (STH) and one at Druridge Pools.

**Wigeon** *Anas penelope*

Northerly movement involved a total of 1,334 N at Seaton Sluice between 13th-22nd (SSWT), and 95 N at Newbiggin on 17th-18th (ASH et al.). Budle Bay attracted 15 on 1st which rose to 1,600 by 26th (CGK/GPK), 388 were at Shield on the Wall Dam on 23rd (PRM), 53 at Grindon Lough on 14th increasing to 281 by 23rd (PRM), and 84-100 at Big Waters, Derwent Reservoir and Gosforth Park NR. Ten to 31 were at Blyth, Bothal, Linton and Swallow Ponds, and the Tweed Estuary. More unusual was one at Tynemouth boating lake between 11th-30th (DRW).

**Gadwall** *Anas strepera*

One flew N at Seaton Sluice on 14th (SSWT). Peak counts were 51 at Big Waters on 15th (GB), 34 at Linton Ponds on 19th (CDH), 29 at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN), ten to 12 at Druridge Pools and Widdrington Moor Lake (TRD/JD), seven at Grindon Lough, and two to three at Bothal, Cresswell and Swallow Ponds, and Castron.

**Teal** *Anas crecca*

The monthly total at Seaton Sluice was a notable 2,633 N and 227 S, including 548 N on 4th (SSWT). Also on 4th, 307 flew N at Newbiggin (DM/STH/GB), 196 N at Tynemouth (DRW), and 70-80 at Boulmer and Whitley Bay, while 40 flew N at Whitley Bay on 5th. Budle Bay held 1,200 on 23rd (CGK/GPK), 252 were at Derwent Reservoir on 23rd (IFo), 210 at Grindon Lough (PRM), and 105-115 at Arcot Pond, Derwent Reservoir and Holy Island 'rocket field'. Counts of 62-66 came from the Tweed Estuary and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, while 12 to 24 were at Berwick North Shore, Bothal and Linton Ponds, Gosforth Park NR, Holy Island and Shield on the Wall Dam.



**Mallard** *Anas platyrhynchos*

Peak counts were 133 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 13th (SR), 110 at Derwent Reservoir on 24th (IFo), 72 at Bothal Pond on 17th (TD), 50-52 at Alnwick, Gosforth Park NR, Linton Ponds and Newcastle Exhibition Park, and 33-40 at Grindon Lough, Newcastle Leazes Park and Willington Quay. Counts of 11-25 came from Branton GP, Byker, Cocklawburn Pond, Grindon Lough and QEII CP Lake. A brood of five half-grown young were at Newcastle Civic Centre on 8th (DM).

**Pintail** *Anas acuta*

A total of 21 flew N at Seaton Sluice between 4th-19th (SSWT), 14 moved N at Tynemouth between 4th-10th (DRW), and eight N at Whitley Bay on 4th (IJ). 31 at East Chevington on 11th (NFO) was a notable count away from Lindisfarne NNR, while 18 were noted there on 25th (JL) and four to nine on several further dates. Other peak counts were 12 at Big Waters on 11th (a site record; MM *per* GB), six at Budle Bay on 17th (GPK), and three to four at Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Pools and Widdrington Moor Lake. One to two also visited Grindon Lough, Holywell Pond and Whittle Dene Reservoirs but one at Newcastle Exhibition Park between 16th-23rd was at an unusual locality (GB).

**Shoveler** *Anas clypeata*

Four flew N at Seaton Sluice between 14th-16th (SSWT). East Chevington attracted good numbers, peaking at 76 on 25th (JL). Other peak counts elsewhere were 15 at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN), 12 at Cresswell Pond on 18th (IRD), and nine to ten at Grindon Lough (PRM) and Holywell Pond (SPP). Three to four were at Arcot and Swallow Ponds, Budle Bay and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, and one to two at Big Waters, Grindon Lough, Shield on the Wall Dam and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. More unusual were two at the Blyth Estuary on 4th (GB).

**Garganey** *Anas querquedula*

One was at Gosforth Park NR on 12th and 15th (MPF/NHSN).

**Pochard** *Aythya ferina*

Six were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 27th (SR), four at Grindon Lough on 28th (PRM), four at Widdrington Moor Lake on 25th (JL), and one to two at Big Waters, Bothal Pond and Gosforth Park NR.

**Tufted Duck** *Aythya fuligula*

Four flew N at Seaton Sluice on 28th (SSWT) and three N at Newbiggin on 18th (STH). The largest count was of 56 at Newcastle Exhibition Park on 27th (possibly a site record; GB), 26 were at Big Waters on 19th (GB), 23 at Bothal Pond on 4th (TD), 23 at QEII CP Lake on 19th (CDH), and 12-15 at Grindon Lough (PRM), Linton Ponds (CDH) and Newcastle Leazes Park. One to nine were also at Arcot and Cocklawburn Ponds, and Derwent Reservoir. More unusual was one at Budle Bay on 25th (GPK).

**Scaup** *Aythya marila*

One flew N at Cocklawburn on 29th (MHu). Singles were at Budle Bay on 30th (GPK), East Chevington on 17th and 25th (IRD/JL), and Grindon Lough on 23rd and 28th (PRM).

**Eider** *Somateria mollissima*

27 moved N and 45 S at Seaton Sluice from 25th (MHu), 142 were at Cocklawburn on 20th (MHu), and five to seven at Berwick North Shore and the Tweed Estuary.

**Common Scoter** *Melanitta nigra*

Seaton Sluice recorded a monthly total of 1,034 N and 125 S (SSWT), and four to five flew N at Newbiggin and Tynemouth-Whitley Bay. About 185 were off Cheswick on 18th (BWG), 90 at Druridge on 5th (TRD/JD), ten to 14 at Boulmer and Cocklawburn, and one at Longhoughton Low Steads. An unusual freshwater record involved two at Big Waters on 16th (ISD/GB).

**Velvet Scoter** *Melanitta fusca*

Nine flew N at Seaton Sluice between 4th-16th (SSWT), two N at Newbiggin (STH/DM) and one N at Tynemouth (DRW) on 4th.

**Goldeneye** *Bucephala clangula*

Two at Branton GP on 2nd (JD) and one at East Chevington on 1st (TRD/IFo) were the only reports.

**Red-breasted Merganser** *Mergus serrator*

Seven were at Budle Bay on 25th (GPK), and one to two at Boulmer and Druridge Bay. More unusual were three well inland at Broomlee Lough on 18th (MRS).

**Goosander** *Mergus merganser*

Two flew N and 12 S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT), three flew N at Newbiggin on 4th (STH/DM) and two S at Hartley Bay on 28th (SPP). At Holy Island, 228 were off Sandon Bay on 10th (SR/AH) and 95 flightless juveniles at St Cuthbert's Island on 12th (IK). Also in the north, 60 were at Budle Point on 2nd (GPK), 39 at the Tweed Estuary on 15th (MHu), 22 at Branton GP on 22nd (MJC), and 16 at Cocklawburn (MHu). A total of 12 was counted between Bedlington-Blyth (MJC), five to nine were at Berwick North Shore, Blindburn Farm (Upper Coquetdale), Calot Shad (River Tweed), Castle Island, Rothbury, and fours at Cambois, Derwent Reservoir and Warkworth. Singles were also at Boulmer and Thrum Mill (Rothbury).

**Quail** *Coturnix coturnix*

Four birds were calling in the Lucker area during the month (JHa).

**Red-legged Partridge** *Alectoris rufa*

Two were at Big Waters NWT on 10th (GB) and a single at Alnwick Moor on 4th continued the trend of very few sightings there this year, presumably as a result of not many being released (TRD/JD).

**Red Grouse** *Lagopus lagopus*

An approximate count of 75 were seen during a one hour walk across Blanchland Moor on 4th (AJH) and seven were at Broadstruther (The Cheviots) on 18th (JD).

**Black Grouse** *Tetrao tetrix*

Single females were at Crag Lough and Derwent Reservoir.

**Grey Partridge** *Perdix perdix*

14 were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 13th (SR) and 11 at Beal on 18th (ADM). Up to nine were present at Gosforth Park NR throughout the month (NHSN) and at Fenham-le-Moor on 17th (GB). One to five were elsewhere, including two still present on Holy Island.

**Pheasant** *Phasianus colchicus*

Singles were seen at Hartley West Farm (Holywell Dene) on 17th and 18th (RJP).

**Red-throated Diver** *Gavia stellata*

The total passage recorded during the month at Seaton Sluice was above the average for September with 231 (43 N and 188 S) in 70 hours of observation (SSWT). 11 flew S past Newbiggin Point on 18th (ASH/IK) after ten were observed past there on 17th (ASH/BD/DD/MA *et al.*). One to six were reported from many coastal localities, some still in summer plumage.

**Great Northern Diver** *Gavia immer*

The first of the autumn flew S past Seaton Sluice on 29th (SSWT).

**Fulmar** *Fulmarus glacialis*

The highest count of the month was 80 N past Boulmer on 4th (TRD/JD), with 66 N at Newbiggin between 0920-1130 on the same day (STH/DM). 14 were at Dunstanburgh on 5th and one to three were present at various other coastal localities. An unusual inland sighting was one circling Swallow Pond on 3rd (SPP).

**Great Shearwater** *Puffinus gravis*

On the evening of 17th – during what turned out to be an exceptional day for Shearwaters in general, and due in part to the large seawatch that took place at Newbiggin comprising of at least 11 observers - two individuals were tracked by many observers, about an hour apart, heading N past St.Mary's, Seaton Sluice then Newbiggin. (SSWT/AC/ASH/DD *et al.*).

**Sooty Shearwater** *Puffinus griseus*

Seaton Sluice Watch Tower reported "extremely low numbers" with a monthly total of 35 N, the majority (33) being on just one day, the 17th (SSWT), however in the afternoon of the 17th the greater number of observers at Newbiggin turned up a grand total of 65 between 14:30-18:00 (ASH/BB/JS/ML *et al.*). Five were seen in the North Sea during a pelagic on the 18th (PS). Only further reports were of one to five birds, all heading N, from three other locations.

**Manx Shearwater** *Puffinus puffinus*

The monthly total past Seaton Sluice was 350 N and nine S which included 315 N in just three hours on 17th (SSWT). 214 were recorded flying N in groups of one to three birds during a pelagic between Whitley Bay–Newbiggin on 18th (PS) and 125 passed Newbiggin Point on 17th (ASH/RF/ML *et al.*). At Tynemouth 31 flew N between 0645-0915 on 4th (DRW) and one to eight were recorded passing three other coastal locations.

**Balearic Shearwater** *Puffinus mauretanicus*

Two reports past Seaton Sluice - the first was an intermediate/dark individual flying S at 07:22 on 8th, subsequently recorded at Whitburn, and the second was a pale individual flying N at 17:16 on 17th (SSWT), which was also recorded past Newbiggin by the mass of seawatchers present on that day.

**Gannet** *Morus bassanus*

At Seaton Sluice, the highest count by far was 1700 N in five hours on 4th (SSWT), following on from 900 N in two hours on 2nd (SSWT). On 4th, 442 flew N during a two hour sea watch at Church Point (Newbiggin) (DM/STH). 140 were counted heading northbound past Boulmer on 4th (TRD/JD), 40 at Newton Point on 18th and 34 N past Newbiggin in two hours, also on 18th (STH). One to five were reported from several other coastal points.

**Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo*

No obvious passage was noted at Seaton Sluice with the peak count being ten N and 40 S on 30th (SSWT). Blyth Harbour roost held 137 on 7th (STH), 62 were at North Shields Fish Quay on 18th (PS), 53 were at East Chevington North Pool on 1st (IFo), a total of 50 were scattered around the Newbiggin area during a visit on 10th and Castle Island (River Wansbeck) peaked at 43 on 9th (STH). A WeBS count at the River Tweed Estuary produced 37 on 15th (MHu), 34 were on a breakwater in Newbiggin Bay on 4th (DM/STH) and the monthly maximum at Derwent Reservoir was 31 on 11th (IFo). 18 were found between Whitley Bay–Rockcliffe on 10th (IJ) and 18 were also present during a WeBS count at Berwick North Shore on 16th (MHu). Ten were at Big Waters NWT on 14th and two immatures were at Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) on 17th. Two to eight were at several other localities.

**Shag** *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

Eight N on 17th was the daily maximum count with small numbers on most other days at Seaton Sluice (SSWT). 28 were at Berwick North Shore during a WeBS count on 16th (MHu) with one to three birds reported from a further three localities.

**Bittern** *Botaurus stellaris*

The single, elusive, bird present at Gosforth Park NR since July increased to two or even possibly three individuals by the end of September (NHSN).

**Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta*

Numbers and sightings continue to increase with 21 at Fenham-le-Moor on 19th (AJ), a peak of 20 at Cresswell Pond on 5th (AJR) and 13 at Castle Island (River Wansbeck) on 9th (STH). Seven were counted on the River Blyth between Furnace Bridge (Bedlington)–Cowley Road (Blyth) on 6th (MJC), Druridge Pools held four on 1st and there were many other records of one to eight from other coastal sites.

**Great White Egret** *Ardea alba*

The Druridge Pools bird remained until at least 6th (MJC/JR/TRD *et al.*) and, presumably the same individual, was seen at Gosforth Park NR on 8th (NHSN).



A great White Egret at Gosforth Park NR  
8th September by Colin Waite

**Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea*

24 were counted during a WeBS visit to the Tweed Estuary on 15th (MHu) and Cresswell Pond peaked at 12 on 6th (AJR). Holy Island held eight on 17th (PRM) and one to five were at several other locations.



**Little Grebe** *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Peak counts were as follows:

Locality	Peak Count	Date	Observer/notes
Holywell Pond	29	6th	SPP
East Chevington	24	25th	WeBS count (JL). Good breeding season
Bothal Pond	17	3rd	(JR)
Linton Ponds	13	19th	Five adults and eight juveniles (CDH)
Airy Holm Reservoir	11	3rd	(IFo)
Whittle Dene Reservoirs	8	5th	(SR)
Big Waters NWT	8	10th	GB

One to five birds were at many other localities including a scarce visitor at Budle Bay on 20th (GPK).

**Great Crested Grebe** *Podiceps cristatus*

Whittle Dene Reservoirs hosted seven on 5th (SR), six were at Killingworth Lake on 15th (LJM) and four were at East Chevington and Cresswell Pond on several dates. One to three were at Airy Holm Reservoir (Shotleyfield), Big Waters NWT, Castle Island (a patch "mega"), Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Pools and on the sea at Druridge, and at Seaton Sluice.

**Red Kite** *Milvus Milvus*

Two birds were at Snods Edge on 8th and single birds were seen at Derwent Reservoir on 11th and 25th (IFo).

**Harrier sp**

A juvenile ringtail flew N at Druridge Pools on 1st (MJC/ASH/TW/AJN).

**Marsh Harrier** *Circus aeruginosus*

A large juvenile, almost certainly a female mobbed and drove off an adult male at Druridge Pools on 15th (IK), and two un-sexed birds were at East Chevington on 17th (IRD). Sightings of juveniles came from Cresswell, Druridge Pools and East Chevington including one bird which had a go at a Brown Hare. The only sighting away from the Druridge Bay area was a juvenile at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 10th (SR).

**Pallid Harrier** *Circus macrourus*

A juvenile male was over Holy Island Village early morning on 15th (MJC) and was also seen on 16th by other observers.



The Pallid Harrier at Holy Island on 15th September by Mike Carr

**Goshawk** *Accipiter gentilis*

A male was noted over Grindon Lough at midday on 15th (PRM).

**Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter nisus*

All sightings this month involved single birds were noted at Acomb, Bedlington, Cramlington, Craster, East Sleekburn, Ellington, Gosforth, Hedgeley, Holy Island, Holywell Dene & at Jesmond Dene (Newcastle)

**Common Buzzard** *Buteo buteo*

Five birds were at Wallsend Swallow Pond on 10th (SPP) and five were also at Prestwick Carr on 15th (MRS). A peak count of four birds were at Gosforth Park NR during the month (NHSN), four birds were at Derwent Reservoir on 3rd (IFo) and at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 19th (PRM). Three birds were at Fourstones on 5th (AJH), Causey Park on 19th (JMA) and at Grindon Lough on 23rd (PRM). One or two birds were recorded at Alnwick Garden, Blagdon, Bolton, Grindon Lough, Haughton Strother GS (Humshaugh), Holywell Dene, Nun's Moor (Newcastle), Seaton Burn & Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

**Osprey** *Pandion haliaetuss*

Derwent Reservoir had a minimum of 4 passage birds up to 14th, including one coloured ringed as a nestling in Tairn, near Tanfield, Easter Ross, Scotland on 24th June 2010. On 10th a juvenile was on the marker posts on Pilgrims' Way, Lindisfarne (IK).

**Water Rail** *Rallus aquaticus*

Gosforth Park NR had a peak count of five plus birds during the month (NHSN). Two birds were at Cresswell Pond on 3rd (IRD) and singles there on several dates (IRD *et al*), two birds were also at Big Waters NWT on 14th (GB) and Prestwick Carr on 19th (PCF). Singles were either seen or heard at Backworth, Big Waters NWT, Cresswell Pond, East Chevington and Holy Island Lough.

**Moorhen** *Gallinula chloropus*

21 birds were at Charlton Mires on 13th (AH), a peak count of 17 birds were at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN) and 15 birds were noted at Big Waters NWT on 21st (CDH) and 10 birds were at Arcot Pond on 11th (DM). One to nine birds were at Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Jesmond Dene (Newcastle), Leazes Park (Newcastle), Linton Pond and at QEII CP.

**Coot** *Fulica atra*

A WeBS count of 116 birds came from Widdrington Moor Lake on 25th (JL) and a peak count of 95 on 26th at Big Waters NWT (GB). Bothal Pond had 59 birds on 4 and 46 at Linton Ponds on 19th (CDH), Wallsend Swallow Pond had 34 birds on 21st CDH) and 20 birds were at QEII CP on 19th (CDH). Exhibition Park (Newcastle) had 16 birds on 16th and 10 were at Leazes Park (Newcastle) on 19th (DM). One to nine birds were at Arcot Pond, Cocklawburn Pond, Exhibition Park (Newcastle) and Leazes Park (Newcastle).

**Avocet** *Recurvirostra avosetta*

All records came from Cresswell. The highest count was of eleven on 1st (MJC/ASH/TW/AJN) with three juveniles noted on 5th (TRD/JD); eight birds were still present on 24th (IRD).

**Oystercatcher** *Haematopus ostralegus*

A combination of passage migrants and returning winter birds made for high numbers at coastal locations with the highest count of 350 at St. Cuthbert's Island, Holy Island on 10th (IK). 300 birds were present at Lindisfarne NNR, Ross, Black Law on 12th (SRB) with 175 at nearby Budle Bay on 26th (CGK/GPK). Away from Lindisfarne NNR the largest count was at Tynemouth where 102 occurred on 6th (DRW). Smaller counts were made at the following coastal sites: Berwick, North Shore (72 on 16th); Tweed estuary (56 on 15th); Warkworth, Birling Carrs (44 on 26th) and at Whitley Bay, Rockcliffe. The latest record from an inland site came from Derwent Reservoir, where a single was reported on 16th (IFo)

**Golden Plover** *Pluvialis apricaria*

Coastal numbers continued their autumn build-up, the largest count coming from Holy Island on 18th when an estimated 2,000 were recorded (TRD). For much of the month, Holy Island regularly hosted ca. 1,000 birds (IK). Counts in excess of 100 also came from: Boulmer (400 on 4th, TRD/JD); Whitley Bay, Rockcliffe (360-400 on 29th, IJ); Seaton Sluice Watch Tower (160 S on 27th-29th); Derwent Reservoir (a precise count of 150 on 18th, IFo). Other double figure counts came from: Bedlington; Cramlington East; Grindon Lough; Newbiggin, Church Point; Newcastle; Newton Point and Prestwick Carr. Records involving single birds came from Cocklawburn and Cresswell Pond.



A Golden Plover at Newton Point  
18th September by Tim Dean

**Grey Plover** *Pluvialis squatarola*

Most records came from the Lindisfarne NNR with 75 seen on 24th at Longbridge End / Beal Point (CGK/GPK), 40 at Guile Point/Fenham Flats on 12th and 40 at Budle Bay on 30th (GPK). Singles were seen at Hauxley NWT on 22nd and from Seaton Sluice Watch Tower on 29th.

**Lapwing** *Vanellus vanellus*

Large inland flocks grew to 1,200 at Whittle Dene Reservoir on 18th (ASJ) and at Derwent Reservoir on 19th (IFo). The former had reduced to 478 by 21st (SR). Other three-figure counts were: Alnwick, Charlton Mires (350 on 17th, GB); R Wansbeck, Castle Island (345 on 9th, STH); Cresswell Pond (191 on 18th, IRD); Grindon Lough (160 on 30th, PRM); Branton GP (143 on 22nd, MJC); Big Waters NWT (120 on 24th, GB); Cocklawburn (114 on 12th and 20th, MHu); Grindon Lough (110+ on 28th with similar numbers in the preceding weeks, PRM). Other records of up to 60 birds came from: R Blyth, Bedlington-Blyth (60); Monk's House Pool (40); Newcastle, Elswick (30); R Tweed estuary (26); and West Weetwood (23).

**Little Ringed Plover** *Charadrius dubius*

There were two records: two birds were recorded at Bothal Pond on 4th (TD) and two juveniles were noted at R Wansbeck, Castle Island on 10th (ASJ).

**Ringed Plover** *Charadrius hiaticula*

Post-breeding gatherings were very much in evidence in the northern part of the county with 200 birds seen at Guile Point/Fenham Flats on 12th (SRB), 84 at Cocklawburn on the same day (MHu), 60 at Boulmer on 4th (TRD/JD), 40 at nearby Alnmouth on 26th (JMA) and 40 at Berwick, North Shore on 4th (MHu). Further south, 62 were noted at St. Mary's on 20th (ASJ) and a count of 38 was made on 1st at Snab Point, Cresswell (TRD). Smaller counts came from: Hauxley Beach (36 on 6th, IFo); Tweed Estuary (28 on 15th, MHu); Blyth Harbour (19 on 7th, STH); Low Newton scrape (15 on 18th, TRD). Other, single figure counts came from: Amble; Bamburgh; Bothal Pond; Cambois, Derwent Reservoir; Lindisfarne NNR, R. Wansbeck, Castle Island and Whitley Bay, Rockcliffe.



A Ringed Plover at St. Mary's by Alan Jack on 25th September



**Whimbrel** *Numenius phaeopus*

A few passage migrants continued to move through with only four birds recorded at Seaton Sluice Watch Tower. All other records were of singles and came from: Boulmer on 4th (TRD); Budle Bay on 1st and 17th (GPK and GR, respectively); Holy Island causeway and nearby Longbridge End on 13th and 17th (AA and GB, respectively) and St. Mary's on 10th (ASJ).

**Curlew** *Numenius arquata*

Reported numbers were well down on last month with sizeable flocks still being recorded inland, as at Caistron on 17th when 55 were seen (JD). Nearly all other reports were from coastal or near-coastal locations: 30-48 in and around the Tweed estuary between 15th-21st (MHu); 28 on the R. Blyth between Bedlington and Blyth on 6th (MJC); twelve at Cambois on the same day (MJC). Other single-figure counts came from: Cullercoats; Derwent Reservoir; Newcastle Business Park and Whitley Bay, Rockcliffe.

**Black-tailed Godwit** *Limosa limosa*

Passage migration appeared to be reaching its peak with 52-72 birds recorded at R. Wansbeck, Castle Island between 9th-28th (STH, IFo, ASJ). The Blyth estuary held 24-25 birds on 4th-6th (GB, LJM) and eleven were at Budle Bay on 6th (GPK). Eight were recorded at Cresswell Pond on the 18th and 28th (IRD and STH/IFo) with seven at the same location on 1st (MJC/ASH/TW/AJN). Seven were also seen at Charlton Mires (north of Alnwick) on 4th (AH), six and then four birds were reported from Monk's House Pool on 9th and 30th (MJC, TRD/JD) and one to three birds were seen at Druridge Pools on various dates. Other sites with records of two or less were: Bothal Pond (Coney Garth); Gosforth Park NR; Grindon Lough; Holy Island; Low Newton scape; and Lindisfarne NNR (Longbridge End). Seaton Sluice Watch Tower only reported a single bird.



A Black Tailed Godwit at St.Mary's on 1st September by Alan Jack

**Bar-tailed Godwit** *Limosa lapponica*

A count of 600+ at Lindisfarne NNR on 16th (ASJ) was by far the largest count this month with Budle Bay holding 42 birds also on 16th (GPK). Twenty three birds were reported from St. Mary's on 11th, an increase from the twelve reported on 8th (SPP). The only other double-figure count was from Berwick, North Shore, where ten birds were seen on 18th (MHu). Other records came from: Blyth estuary; Lindisfarne NNR, Beal Point; Creswell Pond; Hauxley NWT; Boulmer; Seaton Sluice Watch Tower; and Tynemouth.

**Turnstone** *Arenaria interpres*

The highest count was 200 at St Mary's Island on 15th (SPP). Other significant concentrations were 68 at Berwick North Shore on 16th (MHu), 47 at Craster- Dunstanburgh on 5th (IRD) and the peak count at Tynemouth was 39 on 6th (DRW). Ten-22 were at Cocklawburn, Longhoughton, Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) and Stag Rocks. Single figure counts were at six other localities including six on the River Blyth between Furnace Bridge and the Sleekburn confluence (MJC).

**Knot** *Calidris canutus*

Northbound passage involved 54 at Seaton Sluice on 2nd (SSWT) and ca.50 at Hauxley on 4th (HRS). The high tide roost at St Cuthbert's Island (Lindisfarne NNR) held 700 on 10th (IK). Slightly further south, Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) saw 225 gather on 12th (GPK). In the south east, the maximum at Newbiggin was 55 on 8th (HP). Counts of fewer than ten were made at Cambois, Cocklawburn, Cresswell and Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay).

**Ruff** *Calidris pugnax*

Numbers from August remained high into the early part of the month with the largest count being 22 at Charlton Mires (north of Alnwick) on 4th (AH). On 1st, 18 were at East Chevington and eight at Druridge Pools (TRD/EC/JSB). Elsewhere there were four at Budle Bay and Castle Island, three at Linton Pond, the Tweed estuary and flying south at Cresswell Pond. Two were also at Bothal Pond. By 17th, the groups at both Charlton Mires and East Chevington had reduced to two, as birds moved on. Singles were at Beal Point (Lindisfarne NNR), Berwick North Shore, Holy Island, Low Newton, Monks House Pool and St Mary's Wetland. One at Caistron on 17th was noted as 'unusual this far inland' (JD).

**Curlew Sandpiper** *Calidris ferruginea*

The birds noted at Boulmer in late August had moved on with only one noted on 4th (TRD/JD). Four were on the shoreline at Hauxley on 6th (IFo), three were seen at Holy Island causeway on 4th (MJC). Two were Druridge Pools on 1st, Budle Bay on 5th and at Castle Island (River Wansbeck) on 9th and 28th. Singles were seen at Cambois, Low Newton, St Mary's Island, and flying north with Dunlin at Seaton Sluice.

**Sanderling** *Calidris alba*

The largest flock this month was at St Mary's Island with a peak of 173 on 7th (ASJ). All other birds were seen between Cocklawburn and Boulmer. The maximum counts were 60 at Beal Point (Lindisfarne NNR) on 30th, 40 at Longhoughton on 20th (TRD/JD) and Budle Bay on 30th (CGK/GPK). Low Newton held a maximum of 30 on 21st and 23 were at Cocklawburn on 4th. At Lindisfarne NNR, ten were noted at Guile Point (Fenham Flats) and four at Ross Back Sands. Singles were at Boulmer and Newton Point.

**Dunlin** *Calidris alpina*

Passage noted at Seaton Sluice saw 346 fly S from 14th-16th. Birds were well distributed along the coast and coastal pools this month. As in August, Budle Bay attracted the largest numbers with 360 on 20th (GPK). At Boulmer 150 were seen on 4th (TRD/JD) and Castle Island (River Wansbeck) saw an increase from 53 on 9th to 83 on 29th (STH/IFo). Counts of 40-48 came from Cambois, Cocklawburn and Low Newton. WEBS counts in the Berwick area revealed 30 on the north shore on 16th and 28 in the Tweed Estuary on 15th. The Druridge Bay area attracted groups of 10-23 to Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, East Chevington and Hauxley NWT, between 4th-22nd. Elsewhere, one to ten were at ten localities between Calot Shad (Tweed Estuary) and Tynemouth including two still inland at Grindon Lough and Derwent Reservoir.

**Purple Sandpiper** *Calidris maritima*

At Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) ca.100 were counted on 11th (JR) but only one on 30th (TRD/JD). Two to eight were at Cocklawburn, Cullercoats, Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) Tynemouth, and Seaton Sluice from 1-29th.



A Little Stint at St.Mary's by on 16th September by Alan Jack

**Little Stint** *Calidris minuta*

Three remained from last month's influx with singles at Low Newton scrape from 9th-18th (AA/TRD), the Rocket Field Pools on Holy Island on 10th (IK) and St Mary's Island from 16th-29th (ASJ/AC/MRS)

**White-rumped Sandpiper** *Calidris fuscicollis*

The bird at Amble was last reported there on 1st (MJC/ASH/TW/AJN). What was probably the same bird was reported as a moulting adult at Castle Island (River Wansbeck) on 6th (AC).

**Common Sandpiper** *Actitis hypoleucos*

Birds were vacating the area after the breeding season. At Seaton Sluice, three flew south from 5th-16th (SSWT). Three were still inland at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 10th (SR) and the last bird at Derwent Reservoir was seen on 14th (IFo). Elsewhere two were at Budle Bay on 2nd (GPK). Singles were seen at Big Waters, Bothal Pond, Cresswell Pond, Tynemouth, and Castle Island between 1st-18th. The last report this month was a single at the unusual location of Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 22nd (GB).

**Green Sandpiper** *Tringa ochropus*

As in August, three were at the regular haunt of Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 13th (SR) and two were at Bothal Pond on 17th (TD). Two were also at Big Waters on 18th (GB). Singles were seen at Blagdon (Brenkley) from 1st-15th, Charlton Mires on 13th, Branton on 22nd Gosforth Park NR from 8th-22nd,.

**Spotted Redshank** *Tringa erythropus*

At Budle Bay two (adult and juvenile) were seen on 1st- 20th and two adults from 22nd-30th (GPK). A juvenile appeared at East Chevington North pool on 22nd (IFo). One flew over the Vicar's Garden, Holy Island calling on 17th (PRM) and a single was seen at Beal Point (Lindisfarne NNR) on 30th (IK).

**Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia*

Holy Island retained good numbers with a maximum of 13 counted at the Longbridge End area from 10th-17th (SR/AH/GB). Birds were present at nearby Budle Bay all month with a peak of seven on 7th (GPK). At Cresswell there were four from 1st-4th (TRD/MJC *et al.*) reducing to two by 28th (STH/IFo). Four were also seen at Beal Point (Lindisfarne NNR) on 30th (IK). The peak count at Whittle Dene Reservoirs was three on 10th (SR). One-two were at Blagdon, Bothal Pond, Cambois, Cullercoats, East Chevington, Druridge Pools, Gosforth Park NR, River Blyth, Tynemouth and West Ord (Berwick) during the month.

**Wood Sandpiper** *Tringa glareola*

A single bird at Bothal Pond on 3rd was the sole report (SR).

**Redshank** *Tringa totanus*

At Seaton Sluice, passage was evident by 46 flying north and 78 flying south from 1st-10th (SSWT). Budle Bay again had high numbers with 265 counted on 1st reducing to 140 on 26th (GPK). The highest count at the high tide roost at the Rocket Fields Pools (Holy Island) was 162 on 17th (PRM). Groups of 120 were at the River Tweed Estuary on 15th and River Blyth between Furnace Bridge, Bedlington and Cawley Road, Blyth on 6th. Counts of six-72 were made at Berwick North Shore, Cresswell Pond, Cullercoats, Elswick (Newcastle), Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay), and the River Wansbeck. The first of the year at West Hartford was seen on 11th (LJM) and one was still at Grindon Lough on 28th (PRM).

**Jack Snipe** *Lymnocyrtus minimus*

The first of the autumn was at least one at Gosforth Park NR from mid-month (NHSN).

**Woodcock** *Scolopax rusticola*

The first report since June involved an exhausted migrant flushed on the Crooked Lonnen, Holy Island on 30th (IK).

**Snipe** *Gallinago gallinago*

Numbers began to build up with autumn arrivals evident with six birds flying north at Tynemouth, two north at Seaton Sluice and ten 'in-off' the sea at Budle Bay from 14-25th (SSWT/DRW/CGK/GPK). The largest gatherings were 54 at Castle Island (River Wansbeck) on 28th (STH/IFo), 30 at Monk's House Pool on 9th (MJC), 17 at Charlton Mires and 12 at Druridge Pools from 1st-3rd. Birds were widespread with reports of one-six at 13 other localities from Holy Island in the north, Gosforth Park NR in the south and Broomlee Lough in the west.

**Arctic Skua** *Stercorarius parasiticus*

Extremely low numbers, in a very poor year at Seaton Sluice for this species, with a total of 32 (13N and 19S) in 70 hours of seawatching in September (SSWT). Other sightings were three flying north at Newbiggin on 4th (GB). Three dark phase birds were seen on a pelagic off Tynemouth (date not given). Singles were seen on 5th at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) and Druridge. One was at Amble on 10th and flying north at Meadow Haven (Berwick) on 12th.

**Long-tailed Skua** *Stercorarius longicaudus*

A juvenile was reported off Tynemouth on 18th (SPP).

**Great Skua** *Stercorarius skua*

The only reports were one flying north at Tynemouth on 3rd (DRW) and one off Whitley Bay during a pelagic on 18th (DM)

**Auk** *sp*

Low numbers were recorded at Seaton Sluice with the first real movement of autumn, comprising 100S in three hours on 29th (SSWT).



**Puffin** *Fratercula arctica*

Only a few were noted passing Seaton Sluice, with 15N and 7S from 8th-27th (SSWT) and elsewhere singles flew N at Newbiggin (STH/DM) and Tynemouth (DRW) on 4th.

**Guillemot** *Uria aalge*

At Newbiggin, Church Point, 13 were on the sea on 4th (DM/STH) and six flew N at Berwick, Meadow Haven on 29th (MHu). One-two were also recorded at Bamburgh, Boulmer, Cocklawburn, Druridge Bay and Newton Point (TRD/JD/HP/MHu/JD) on various dates throughout.

**Sandwich Tern** *Sterna sandvicensis*

From 1st-4th at Seaton Sluice, the largest numbers passed comprising 106N and 159S but birds were noted throughout with 77S from 27th (SSWT). At Holy Island up to ca.60 were recorded around mid month (IK/PRM) and 24 were at Cocklawburn on 20th before flying off S (MHu). Elsewhere 10-12 were at Boulmer, Druridge and Newton Point (TRD/JD) with one to five at six other sites between Berwick and Cresswell (MHu/TRD/JD).

**Common Tern** *Sterna hirundo*

A total of 883, the majority 582S, passed Seaton Sluice during the first week, thereafter smaller numbers with the last seen on 25th (SSWT). One to two were noted at Boulmer, Derwent Reservoir, East Chevington, Newton Point and the River Blyth Estuary (GB/TRD/JD/IFo).

**Roseate Tern** *Sterna dougallii*

Birds were present in Budle Bay until 15th with a peak count of 21 (15 adults) on 8th (GPK) and at Seaton Sluice six passed between 2nd-3rd (SSWT). One to three were recorded on a number of dates from 3rd-14th at Coquet Island, Druridge, Newbiggin and Tynemouth (DRW/TRD/JD/AJH/GB).

**Arctic Tern** *Sterna paradisaea*

An early departure this year was suggested by a monthly total of 55 moving past Seaton Sluice with a latest date of 8th (SSWT); elsewhere, four were in the Tweed Estuary on 15th (MHu) and two off Church Point, Newbiggin on 4th (DM/STH).

**Kittiwake** *Rissa tridactyla*

A large nscale movement of 2,000S in one hour, during the early morning of 5th at Seaton Sluice was the only passage of note (SSWT). Other records, from 4th-5th, were 615 at Dunstanburgh cliffs (IRD) and 357, either on the beach or moving N at Newbiggin (STM/DM). Double-figure counts came from Berwick (Meadow Haven), Boulmer and the River Tweed Estuary.

**Black-headed Gull** *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

The roost at Budle Point on 10th contained 2,100 (CGK) with counts of 300-600 from Big Waters, the River Blyth (Bedlington-Blyth), the River Tyne Estuary (Elswick Wharf-Business Park) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs (GB/SR/MJC/DM) with 100-250 at Amble Braid, Berwick (North Shore), Longhirst and the River Tweed Estuary (JMA/MHu). Smaller gatherings of 80 were at seven other, mainly inland, localities.

**Little Gull** *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

Single juveniles passed Seaton Sluice on 4th and 7th (SSWT) with singles recorded off Newbiggin on 18th (DM) and at Budle Bay on 20th (GPK).

**Franklin's Gull** *Larus pipixcan*

Only the second county record for an extremely rare transatlantic visitor, an adult in winter plumage, which was found by a sharp-eyed observer in a large flock of Common and Black-headed Gulls at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 16th (SR) and which stayed until 19th, being seen daily by numerous observers, often very mobile and usually well hidden within very large gatherings of other gulls. The bird was again seen briefly at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 30th (and on 1st October) (Birdguides).

**Mediterranean Gull** *Larus melanocephalus*

A peak gathering of 48 was at Newbiggin on 8th and 20+ were seen at Cresswell, Snab Point on 5th. Other sightings comprised two at Budle Bay and Cresswell Pond and singles, the majority being adult birds, at Amble Braid, Arcot Pond, Backworth, Holy Island, Holywell Pond, Monks' House Pool, St Mary's Island, Seaton Sluice and Swallow Pond on many dates up to 27th.

**Common Gull** *Larus canus*

Gatherings of at least 800 were attracted to Whittle Dene Reservoirs from 10th-17th as surrounding arable areas were ploughed (SR/PRM) and elsewhere 230 were at West Ord on 2nd (MHu) with 180 moving S past Seaton Sluice on 30th (SSWT).

**Lesser Black-backed Gull** *Larus fuscus graelsii*

At Seaton Sluice, a total monthly passage of 13N and 20S was recorded from 4th, mainly juvenile birds, noted as 'always under-recorded on autumn passage' (SSWT). At Branton on 1st, 50 were present (JMA) and 35 were recorded on the River Tyne (Elswick Wharf-Business Park) on 5th (DM). Small numbers of up to six on 16th were at Derwent Reservoir all month (JMA/PRM) and four were at Arcot Pond, Exhibition Park and in the Tweed Estuary around mid month (DM/MHu/CDH). One to two, mainly adults, were at five other sites, namely Bothal Pond, Druridge, Grindon Lough, Jesmond Dene and Low Newton scrape.

**Herring Gull** *Larus argentatus argenteus*

A WeBS count in the River Tweed Estuary on 15th included 458 (MHu), 203 were on the River Tyne (Elswick-Business Park) (DM), 100 in the Whitley Bay/Rockcliffe/Cullercoats area (IJ), 52 at Berwick, North Shore (MHu) and 20 at Bothal Pond (TD). One to four were at Exhibition Park, Jesmond Dene and Leazes Park.

A bird of the **Northern** race, *ssp argentatus*, was noted at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 17th (PRM)

**\*Caspian Gull** *Larus cachinnans*

A juvenile was in the River Blyth Estuary on 4th (AC) and a 1st-winter bird(s) were at St Mary's Island on 27th (AC) and on Brier Dene beach on 28th (SPP). The returning adult at Amble Harbour was again recorded on 11th (AC).

**Great Black-backed Gull** *Larus marinus*

At Seaton Sluice, 325 moved N in eight hours on 14th (SSWT). A flock of 77 were at Newbiggin, Church Point on 4th (DM) and smaller gatherings of 20-40 were noted at North Shields Fish Quay, the River Tweed Estuary and Whitley Bay with seven at Berwick, North Shore, up to five at Grindon Lough, two at Greenlee Lough and a single on the River Tyne at Elswick Wharf.

**Feral Pigeon** *Columba livia*

Eleven at Rockcliffe/Cullercoats (Whitley Bay) on 10th (IJ) and present at Jesmond Dene.

**Stock Dove** *Columba oenas*

Low numbers with four at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 17th (PRM), three at Jesmond Dene on 5th (MJCo), two at Wylam on 2nd & QEII Lake on 11th and one at Cresswell Pond on 5th.

**Woodpigeon** *Columba palumbus*

On 25th 80 were at West Flodden (JR), 30-75 at Hartley West Farm during the month (RJP), 60 at Ingram Bridge on 24th with two to 11 at Holywell Dene, Jesmond Dene and Whitley Bay.

**Collared Dove** *Streptopelia decaocto*

A small surge in numbers with 21 at North Blyth on 17th (PCF), 13 at Bede Academy on 27th (PJA), 12 at Alnwick on 15th (JMA) and Cramlington on 16th, nine at Whitley Bay on 27 and eight at Dinnington on the same date. One to four were at Holywell Dene, Jesmond Dene and Kenton.

**Cuckoo** *Cuculus canorus*

One report of a juvenile at Newbiggin on 8th (HP).

**Barn Owl** *Tyto alba*

Late breeding at Holy Island with a pair fledging three young at the beginning of the month the same pair having fledged three from the same box in June (IK). Singles were at Cresswell Pond on 5th & 11th (TRD/JD/IRD) and at Bothal Pond on 26th (IRD).

**Little Owl** *Athene noctua*

A late nesting pair at Lowick during the month (*per* NNBC) with singles at Druridge Pools on 1st & 10th and Derwent Reservoir in 29th.

**Tawny Owl** *Strix aluco*

Two calling frequently in the observer's garden at Fulbeck (Morpeth) and two males at East Ord (Berwick) on 17th (MHu). A female called at Wark (N.Tyne) on 7th, 11th and 21st (PRM) with calling birds at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 26th and 30th (DM).

**Long-eared Owl** *Asio otus*

A juvenile called at Wark (N.Tyne) on 14th (PRM) and one at St Mary's Island on 20th (AC).

**Short-eared Owl** *Asio flammeus*

Two reports of singles at Straight Lonnen (Holy Island) on 4th and 15th (MJC).

**Swift** *Apus apus*

A number of late birds with two south at Cresswell Pond and at Newbiggin on 6th (IFo). Singles at Budle Point on 9th, Swallow Pond on 10th, Tynemouth on 11th, Derwent Reservoir on 12th, Holy Island on 18th and Budle Bay on 25th.

**Kingfisher** *Alcedo atthis*

An encouraging month with reports of two birds at Gosforth Park, Thrum Mill Rothbury on 3rd, Hauxley NWT on 13th, Low Angerton on 18th and 30th, Castle Island on 18th, Jesmond Dene on 25th and Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 27th. Single birds were reported from most of the aforementioned and 16 other locations four of which were coastal.

**Green Woodpecker** *Picus viridis*

One called early in the month at Rothbury (TRD).

**Great Spotted Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos major*

Few reports all singles at Holywell Dene on 3rd and an Old Hartley garden on 9th, Valley Park (Cramlington) on 3rd and 10th, Shildon Cottage (Blanchland) on 4th, Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 8th and East Ord (Brewick) on 16th.

**Kestrel** *Falco tinnunculus*

Three birds including two juveniles were at Gosforth Park NR during September, two birds including a male were at Grindon Lough on 15th (PRM). Singles were at Bellingham, Felton, Holy Island, Holywell Dene, Nedderton (Bedlington), Shield on the Wall, Whittle Dene Reservoirs and at Wooler Common

**Merlin** *Falco columbarius*

All sightings involved singles at Holy Island on 18th and 30th (ADM/TRD/JD); a female was seen near Alnwick on 24th (JR). A bird flew S offshore at Seaton Sluice on 28th (SSWT) and a juvenile male was at Ancroft on 29th (MJC)

**Hobby** *Falco subbuteo*

An adult was noted soaring over Leaplish (Kielder Water) at 15:30h on 10th (PRM).

**Peregrine** *Falco peregrinus*

The two adults present the last two months in Budle Bay (GPK) were still present most days. Single birds were at Derwent Reservoir, East Cramlington, Ellington Dene, Grindon Lough, Newbiggin, Seaton Sluice, St Mary's' Island and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

**Ring necked Parakeet** *Psittacula krameri*

A colony appears to have been established with morning movements of birds over Exhibition Park (Newcastle) peaking at nine on 20th and eight on 22nd all flying E possibly to Heaton Park where six were noted all month (GB/DWB). On 21st five were seen with Crows mobbing a Buzzard at Nuns Moor (Fenham) and one was noted west over Royal Grammar School on afternoon of 6th possibly indicating roosting in the Fenham area.

**Lesser Grey Shrike** *Lanius minor*

A bird with white ring EE was at Long Nanny (Newton) and found to have been a captive bred release from a project in Leida plain NE Spain (TRD/JD).



The Long Nanny Lesser Grey Shrike on 13th September by Tim Dean

**Magpie** *Pica pica*

Six at Fairfield (Alnwick) on 26th (JMA), four at Jesmond Dene on 5th and one on three dates from 19th in an Old Hartley Garden.

**Jay** *Garrulus glandarius*

A peak count of four at Gosforth Park NR. (NHSN), three at Letah Wood Hexham on 1st and 10th (AJH), East Cramlington LNR on 7th (STH) and Ellington Dene on 21st (MJC) with one to two at Bedlington, Big Waters NWT, East Sleekburn, Gloucester Lodge, Whittle Dene Reservoirs and Wooler Common.

**Jackdaw** *Corvus monedula*

Large gatherings of 400 at Big Waters NWT on 15th (GB) and 130 at Beaconhill (Cramlington) on 11th (DM) with 50 at Thrunton and 40 at Reavely on 1st (JMA) and seven at Jesmond Dene on 25th (MJCo).



**Rook** *Corvus frugilegus*

A high count of 250 at Hepple on 3rd, 150 at Sharperton on the same date, 50 at Thrunton on 1st, Minsteracres and Kiln Pit Hill on 28th, 40 at Reavely on 1st and 12th and at Aydon View (Alnwick) on 21st (JMA).

**Carrion Crow** *Corvus corone*

On 11th 32 were at Beaconhill (Cramlington) (DM), 25 at North Shields Fish Quay on 29th, 20 at Alnwick Moor on 1st (JMA), eight east over The Snook (Holy Island) with two to five at Jesmond Dene and Whitley Bay.

**Raven** *Corvus corax*

Eight were demaggotting sheep Wileysrike (Irthing) on 14th (AJR), two at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 17th (PRM) and one at Broadstruther (Cheviots) on 18th (JD).

**Goldcrest** *Regulus regulus*

More than ten were at Grindon Lough on 14th, 6 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 17th (PRM), five at Snook (Holy Island) on 4th and Cambois on 6th (MJC) with four at Kielder Water on 10th and Holy Island on 17th. One to two were at six other locations.

**Blue Tit** *Cyanistes caeruleus*

One to five visited an Old Hartley garden during the month with singles at Jesmond Dene and Whitley Bay. A late breeding record at Tasset two pairs laid 12 eggs with seven young hatched and fledged (JRich).

**Great Tit** *Parus major*

Four at Jesmond Dene on 25th (MJCo) and one to three in an Old Hartley garden (RJP). Breeding at Low Carritheth saw four pairs lay 18 eggs with 13 young hatched and fledged. At Tasset ten pairs laid 53 eggs with 47 young hatched and fledged (JRich).

**Coal Tit** *Periparus ater*

Noted as very numerous at Wallington Hall feeders (MRS) with two at Jesmond Dene and one in an Old Hartley garden.



A Coal Tit in a Marden apple tree by Alan Jack

**Willow Tit** *Poecile montanus*

Three at Prestwick Carr on 24th (PCF), two at Ellington Dene on 8th and at Derwent Reservoir on 13th (MJC/IFo) with singles at the above and Arcot Lane, Big Waters NWT, Swallow Pond and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

**Marsh Tit** *Poecile palustris*

All records singles at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) on 3rd, 11th & 24th (NFO), Thrum Mill (Rothbury) on 11th (JD) and Wallington Hall on 14th (MRS).

**Skylark** *Alauda arvensis*

19 were at Prestwick Carr on 13th with 13 there on 27th (PCF). 50 per hour headed SW at Backworth on 26th (CGK). 14 went W at Derwent Res. on 30th (lfo). Three flew W at Big Waters on 18th and nine flew SW at the same place on 25th (GB).

**Sand Martin** *Riparia riparia*

90 flew S in one hour at Cresswell Pond on 6th with 30 at Derwent Reservoir on 12th and eight SW there on 16th (IFo). 25 were at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) on 10th (IJ), six the latest report on 26th at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) and one to four at Big Waters, Holy Island, Low Newton, Town Moor and West Chevington.

**Swallow** *Hirundo rustica*

A large evening roost in phragmites at Big Waters numbered 1500 on 14th and 15th reducing to 200 on 16th (GB). On 5th 1000+ flew S in one hour at St Mary's with 700 likewise the next day and 620 S between 07:40h and 08:40h at Cresswell Pond on 6th (IFo). At Seaton Sluice Watch Tower 86 moved S in two hours on 28th and 81 in three on 29th. 210 were at Whalton on 13th, 175 at Wallridge on 3rd (ASJ), 150 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 5th (SR), 130 at Ogle on 13th, 110 at Big Waters on 26th and 100 at Derwent Reservoir on 4th. 20 – 80 were at many of the aforementioned and Brandon, Cambois, East Cramlington LNR, Hadston, Holy Island, Holywell Dene, Lorbottle, Town Moor, Sharperton, Prestwick Carr, Wark, Whittle Dene Reservoirs and Widdrington Village with one to 19 at 14 other locations.

**House Martin** *Delichon urbica*

On 6th 160 moved S in one hour at Cresswell Pond with 80 at Derwent Reservoir on 12th (IFo), 60 at Whalton on 13th, 55 at Wallridge on 3rd (ASJ), 50 at Thrunton on 1st (JMA), 40 at Wark (N.Tyne) on 12th (PRM) and one to 25 at 14 other locations. A pair fed newly fledged young at Holy Island on 30th and young were still in nests at Cresswell, Holywell and Tynemouth on 27th (IK/ASJ).

**Long-tailed Tit** *Aegithalos caudatus*

The largest gatherings were 22 at Ellington Dene on 21st (MJC) and 15 at Cramlington (Valley Park) on 4th (DM). Elsewhere, 13 were at Exhibition Park on 20th, up to nine in Holywell Dene, seven at Cramlington (Southfield Green), five at Jesmond Dene and two at Howick Dene.

**Greenish Warbler** *Phylloscopus trochiloides*

A single was photographed on Holy Island (Vicars' garden) on 17th (PRM).

**Yellow-browed Warbler** *Phylloscopus inornatus*

Holy Island held four on 15th, two on 17th and a single on 18th (ADM/MJC). Another was at St Mary's on 21st-22nd (AC/ASJ). One to two were again on Holy Island daily from 22nd-24th, with one also on 29th (ADM/MJC/IK), one was at Whitley Bay Cemetery on 24th (ASJ) and two at Budle Point on 25th (CGK/GPK).



A Yellow-browed Warbler at Snook House on Holy Island on 17th by Mike Carr



**Chiffchaff** *Phylloscopus collybita*

Numbers on Holy Island peaked at 17 on 15th (MJC/ADM). Elsewhere, seven were at Branton GP on 22nd and six at Ellington Dene on 21st and at Derwent Reservoir on 26th. Four were at Cramlington (Barns Park) on 17th, Bamburgh Castle Wood on 18th and Big Waters on 25th and threes were noted at Arcot Pond on 7th, East Cramlington Pond on 13th, Exhibition Park on 15th and Howick Dene on 20th. One to two were reported from a further 21 widespread localities.

**Willow Warbler** *Phylloscopus trochilus*

Holy Island held a peak of 25 on 15th (MJC/ADM), with seven to eight on 17th and one to five on a further four dates. Elsewhere, two were at Arcot Pond on 11th and singles at Druridge Pools on 1st, Boulmer on 4th and Fourstones and Whitley Bay on 5th.

**Blackcap** *Sylvia atricapilla*

Threes were noted at Woodhorn Church on 15th and Coupland on 25th (STH/TRD/JD). Two were noted at Cambois on 6th, Big Waters on 10th, Holy Island on 15th and Derwent Reservoir on 18th, with singles at Holy Island on 17th and East Ord (Berwick) on 18th.

**Garden Warbler** *Sylvia borin*

Singles were noted at Holy Island on 15th and Bamburgh on 18th.

**Lesser Whitethroat** *Sylvia curruca*

Singles were at Holy Island from 17th-18th and at Budle Point from 21st-23rd.

**Whitethroat** *Sylvia communis*

Two on Holy Island on 14th increased to six on 15th (MJC/ADM). Singles were also noted at Boulmer on 4th, Cambois on 6th, Big Waters on 10th and 15th, a Chapel House (Newcastle) garden on 14th and at Beal on 17th.

**Grasshopper Warbler** *Locustella naevia*

Singles were at Bates Minewater Treatment Works (Blyth Estuary) on 6th (LJM) and at Big Waters on 10th (GB).

**Sedge Warbler** *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

A single was at Cresswell Pond on 10th (AJH).

**Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

Up to two were still at Gosforth Park during the month (NHSN). More unusually, a migrant at Exhibition Park on 2nd was the observer's first record for the site (GB). Further singles were noted at East Chevington on 1st (IFo) and St Mary's on 15th (STH/ASJ).

**Nuthatch** *Sitta europaea*

One to three was reported from Bywell Bridge, Jesmond Dene, Kielder Water, Leazes Park, Thrunton and Wark (North Tyne).

**Treecreeper** *Certhia familiaris*

Singles were reported from Kielder Water on 10th, Thrunton on 1st and Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 27th.

**Wren** *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Eight were on Holy Island on 15th and two at Jesmond Dene on 12th.

**Starling** *Sturnus vulgaris*

450 were at Bothal Pond on 1st (IFo) and 420+ at Grindon Lough on 23rd (PRM). Other sizeable gatherings were 200 at Ewart Park on 25th, 100 at Newbiggin on 4th and 71 at Cullercoats on 10th.

The juvenile Rose-coloured  
Starling

Roseden

28th September

Mike Carr  
**Starling**

**Rose-coloured**

*Pastor roseus*

A juvenile was well inland at  
Roseden from 25th-29th  
(TRD/JD/MJC).





**Dipper** *Cinclus cinclus*

Singles were reported from Fourstones, Ingram Bridge, Mitford, Thrum Mill and Wark (North Tyne).

Results from the regular breeding study in Coquetdale were as follows;

14 nests, 84 eggs laid (17 from second clutches), 79 young hatched and 79 young fledged (JR).

**Blackbird** *Turdus merula*

There was a light influx on Holy Island, with eight on 23rd (MJC) and an apparent increase in numbers from 28th (IK). Five were noted at Cullercoats on 10th and one to two at Holywell and Jesmond Denes.

**Fieldfare** *Turdus pilaris*

A presumed early arrival was well inland at Grindon Lough on 30th (PRM).

**Song Thrush** *Turdus philomelos*

There was a sudden, although brief influx of at least 12 possible migrants to feed on ripe Yew berries in a Stamfordham garden on 7th (EC). Holy Island held four on 15th and eight on 22nd

**Redwing** *Turdus iliacus*

One was at Holy Island on 15th (ADM).

**Mistle Thrush** *Turdus viscivorus*

32 near Acomb on 6th (MR) and 16 at East Bolton on 24th were the largest gatherings. A flock of 12 was at Wilkwood East (Upper Coquetdale) on 10th, while five were noted at Exhibition Park, two at Cramlington (Valley Park) and at Horton Grange and one at Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

**Spotted Flycatcher** *Muscicapa striata*

Six were at Holy Island on 15th (MJC/ADM) with singles there on 4th, 14th and 17th. Two were at Swallow Pond on 10th and at Budle Point on 14th and singles at Tynemouth on 14th and Brierdene on 15th. A breeding pair was still at North Sunderland during the month.

**Robin** *Erithacus rubecula*

A 'fall' at Holy Island produced a peak of 33 on 15th with 12-14 from 17th-18th. A second influx later in the month peaked at ca.50 scattered across the island on 24th (IK). Elsewhere ten were at Prestwick Carr on 27th, nine at Whitley Bay on 10th, seven at Bamburgh on 18th and five in Jesmond Dene on 12th. An adult and four juveniles was at Blanchland on 4th and a recently fledged juvenile was at St Mary's on 15th (STH).

**Thrush Nightingale** *Luscinia Luscinia*

A showy individual was found on the tideline at Sandon Bay (Holy Island) on 18th (SR).



The confiding Thrush Nightingale at Sandon Bay, Holy Island by Tim Dean on 18th September

**Red breasted Flycatcher** *Ficedula parva*

A 'fall' on 15th produced at least five (possibly seven) at Holy Island on 15th (ADM/MJC). One of these birds remained at the Snook until the end of the month, while another was in the Straight Lonnen on 23rd (MJC).



A Red breasted Flycatcher  
Holy Island  
28th September  
by Mike Carr

**Pied Flycatcher** *Ficedula hypoleuca*

On Holy Island one was present on 4th and two on 15th.

Results from the regular breeding study Low Carritheth were as follows;  
6 pairs laid 37 eggs, 27 young hatched and 19 young fledged (JR).

**Redstart** *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Four were at Holy Island on 15th (MJC/ADM). Singles were also reported from Big Waters on 3rd, St Mary's on 4th, Exhibition Park on 7th, Cresswell Pond on 10th, Hauxley NWT on 13th and Holy Island on 17th.

At a breeding site at Tasset, two pairs laid 12 eggs, seven young hatched all of which fledged.

**Whinchat** *Saxicola rubetra*

Three to four were noted at Cresswell Pond from 5th-6th (AJR/TRD/JD). East Chevington held three on 4th, two on 11th and a single on 18th. One to two were also at Holy Island from 15th-17th, two were at Backworth on 30th and singles at Cocklawburn on 22nd and well inland at Great Standrop (Cheviots) on 11th.

**Stonechat** *Saxicola rubicola*

There were four in Budle Bay throughout the month (GPK). Threes were at Boulmer (TRD/JD) and at St Mary's (ASJ) on 4th and up to three at Holy Island on 15th-17th. Two's were reported from Brenkley on 30th, Cresswell Pond on 6th and 28th, Druridge Pools on 1st-5th and Low Newton and West Hartford on 21st, with singles also at Backworth on 30th and Greensidehill (Upper Breamish) on 24th.



**Wheatear** *Oenanthe oenanthe*

Three juveniles were at St Mary's on 10th (ASJ) and at Seaton Sluice Watch Tower on 26th (SSWT). Twos were noted at Bennetsfield (juvs.) on 10th, Cocklawburn on 4th and Grindon Lough on 23rd, with singles reported from Blyth Harbour, Boulmer, Brierdene, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Pools, Holy Island, Low Newton, Newbiggin, Newcastle (Town Moor), Snab Point and Spittal (Berwick) on various dates to 21st.

One of two birds at Howick on 30th was of the **Greenland race** *O.o.leucorhoa*



A putative Greenland Wheatear on Holy Island  
30th September  
Mike Carr

**Dunnock** *Prunella modularis*

Four were at Straight Lonnen, Holy Island on 23rd and three at Jesmond Dene on 5th.

**House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus*

During the month, flocks of 100 were noted at Cullercoats, 32 at Whittle Dene and Dinnington and 30 at Druridge. 11-22 were in gardens at Old Hartley and Marden. 15-25 were noted at five sites (JMA).

**Tree Sparrow** *Passer montanus*

30 all month at Waren Mill Caravan Park (GPK). Five at Roseden on 22nd increased to 30 by 25th(TRD/JD). Eight to ten flew E at Swallow Pond on 10th(SPP). Elsewhere, one to three were at eight further sites.

**Yellow Wagtail** *Motacilla flava*

On 4th, three were at Boulmer and two at St Mary's. Two were also at Cresswell on 6th and singles at four other sites up to 21st.

**Grey Headed Wagtail** (*ssp Thunbergi*), a possible flew over Holy Island, calling on 17th(MJC).

**Grey Wagtail** *Motacilla cinerea*

Four in Jesmond Dene on 20th(MJCo) and three at Seaton Sluice were the largest counts. Elsewhere, one to two were seen at ten further sites.

**Pied Wagtail** *Motacilla alba*

45 at Whittle Dene on 13th was by far the largest gathering of the month(SR). Well inland at Ingram 17 were noted on 24th (JR). In two hours on the morning of 30th at East Cramlington ten flew south. One to nine were at six other sites.



**Meadow Pipit** *Anthus pratensis*

Conspicuous southward emigration was witnessed this month with around 700-740 passing along the coast at St Mary's on the morning of 5th and an impressive 1,000+ in one hour the following day. Reducing to 550+ in two hours on 7th(ASJ). 1000+ flew S at St Mary's on 6th 750+ having done so the previous day with 500 feeding and resting at Gloucester Lodge (Blyth) on 10th (ASJ). Also on 7th, 691 were counted passing East Cramlington Nature Reserve in 2.5 hours, with 573 noted passing at that site on 30th (STH). At Tynemouth, 550 headed S in 1.5 hours on 11th(DRW). On 10th, 400 rested and fed in fields near Gloucester Lodge Farm, Blyth, with a further 120 passing overhead(ASJ). A muck heap at Howick attracted 260 feeding migrants on 9th(MJC). 200 noted past Seaton Sluice watch tower on 11th. 150 also flew S past Cambois and Gosforth Garden Village on 6th and 10th respectively(MJC). 142 flew SW on the morning of 11th(GB). Four to 140 birds were also noted at a further 18 sites during the month, including well inland with 40 at Watty Bells Cairn and Stewartshiel(JR). 60 at Holy Island on 15th and around 50 heading south across the Island on 24th(MJC/IK).

**Rock Pipit** *Anthus petrosus*

Six were seen at Hadston Carrs on 13th and at St Mary's on 20th(EC/JSB/ASJ). One to two were noted at four other sites during the month.



A Rock Pipit at St. Mary's by Alan Jack on 11th September

**Chaffinch** *Fringilla coelebs*

120+ were at Leaplish(Kielder) on 10th (PRM). 27 were at North Charlton on 25th(JR).

**Bullfinch** *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Up to four visited an Old Hartley garden during the month(RJP). Four were seen in Holywell Dene on several dates(ASJ). Singles were noted at five further sites.

**Greenfinch** *Chloris chloris*

Nine at Whittle Dene and at St Mary's on 19th(PRM/ASJ). Five were at Newcastle Town Moor on 20th(GB).

**Linnet** *Carduelis cannabina* 160+ at Whittle Dene on 19th, with half that number on 27th(PRM/SR).120 fed in stubble at St Mary's on 28 h(ASJ).110 at Derwent Reservoir on same day(IFo). One to 33 were at 12 further locations.

**Lesser Redpoll** *Carduelis caberet*

16 were at East Cramlington on 23rd(STH).One – three at seven other sites including a single on Holy Island on 20th. 19 Redpoll sp.flew S through Budle Point on 25th (CK/GK).

**Crossbill** *Loxia curvirostra*

Five were at Blakehopeburnhaugh(Kielder) on 24th (JR). Three flew S at East Cramlington LNR on 30th.

**Goldfinch** *Carduelis carduelis*

180 fed at St Mary's on 5th with 150+ at Gloucester Lodge(Blyth) on 6th(ASJ).170 at Derwent Reservoir on 12th and 160+ at Cocklawburn on 13th(IFo/MHu). One to 22 were at nine other sites during September.

**Siskin** *Carduelis spinus*

26 flew S at East Cramlington on 30th, with eight there on 23rd (STH). One to five were at eight further sites throughout the month.

**Lapland Bunting** *Calcarius lapponicus*

One seen at Snook(Holy Island) on 17th, with two there on 20th(MJC/SR).

**Yellowhammer** *Emberiza citrinella*

Eight+ were at Settlingstones on 30th and two at Whittle Dene on 17th(PRM). Also on 17th three were at Spindleston(ASJ).

**Reed Bunting** *Emberiza schoeniclus*

26 were noted throughout Holy Island on 19th(ASJ), with 15 at St Mary's on 28th(ASJ).

**ESCAPES, HYBRIDS AND BIRDS OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN****Escapes****Black Swan** *Cygnus atratus*

One was noted again at Shield on the Wall dam on 4th and 15th (PRM). Also what was presumably the individual from last month from the Tweed Estuary having now moved down to Budle Bay where it was seen on 17th (JR / MJC / ASH ).

**Bar-headed Goose** *Anser indicus*

Two of these regularly occurring escapes were seen at Widdrington Moor Lake on 21st (TRD/JD).

**Hybrids****Saker / Gyr hybrid** *Falco Cherrug / Rusticolus*

A large Saker like falcon was seen bombarding a Curlew on Lindisfarne on 30th (TRD/JD). Later it passed close flying towards Longbridge End when close views and pictures revealed a large bell on a leg and possibly a transmitter on its back. The plumage was intermediate between Saker and Gyr presumably as a result of cross breeding in captivity.

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Berwick Wildlife Group, Natural History Society of Northumbria, North Northumberland Bird Club, Seaton Sluice Watch Tower.

**Apologies for any accidental omissions**

## BULLETIN COMPILATION AND PRODUCTION

This bulletin was compiled by Graeme Bowman (Mute Swan to Ruddy Duck), Steve Laing (Red Grouse to Black-necked Grebe), Trevor Blake (Honey-buzzard to Crane), Tom Brewis (Avocet to Godwit), Clive Hampton (Turnstone to Skua), Eddie Crabtree (Puffin to Great Black-backed Gull), Tim Dean (Escapes, Hybrids and Unknown Origin, List of Contributors, Highlights), Peter Fletcher (Feral Pigeon to Red-rumped Swallow), Mike Richardson (Cetti's Warbler to Pied Flycatcher), Alan Jack (Dunnock to Corn Bunting), Kathy Evans (WeBS Coastal Counts) and Steve Holliday (WeBS Inland Counts).

Data Manager is Tom Brewis

Thanks to David Sanders of NNBC for providing data.

Mail distribution by Paul Stewart.

Edited by Steve Barrett [NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com](mailto:NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com)

## RECORD SUBMISSION

Please email records for the month to [ntbc.records@googlemail.com](mailto:ntbc.records@googlemail.com)

Please email for a copy of the standard spreadsheet and other details.

Location names and grid references: Please use of standard location names and include grid references as this greatly increases the value of records in subsequent analyses. A 1km square grid reference is the ideal e.g. NY8067 for Grindon Lough, but 2km square references (tetrads) are also acceptable e.g. NY86D in this case. A list of localities and their tetrad grid references (tetrad/Locality List) can be downloaded from the 'Resources & Downloads' section of the Club website at <http://www.ntbc.org.uk> – the use of these names, wherever possible, would be highly appreciated.

Could club members ensure they to submit records direct to NTBC rather than just Birdtrack. There may be an assumption by some members this happens automatically. We do not want to miss records.

## PHOTOGRAPHS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Please keep submitting your articles, photographs, sketches and illustrations for the bulletin. Thanks again to those who have supplied the excellent photographs. Please send to Steve Barrett at [NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com](mailto:NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com)

It is preferable if you re-size your photos before sending and a suggested size is 640 x 480 pixels. Please ensure you include the following information with your submissions: name, species, date taken, locality.

Photographs will not be used elsewhere without the photographer's permission.

## MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Annual membership costs £10 for a junior, £30 for an individual, and £32 for a family.

For membership enquiries please contact [ntbc@jobentley.plus.com](mailto:ntbc@jobentley.plus.com)

Membership subscriptions were due at the beginning of October. If you internet bank you can pay online: please include your name in the ref. It is helpful if you email me to let me know when you've made the transfer [ntbc@jobentley.plus.com](mailto:ntbc@jobentley.plus.com)

If you decide to set up a standing order please date the first payment at least a fortnight from your posting date to allow time to process with the bank. You can also set up your standing order directly with your bank if you wish; just let me know.

Finally, if you know anyone who might like to join NTBC please pass on the club information - new members are always welcome.

## Jo Bentley - Hon Treasurer

## NTBC AGM

The Club Annual General Meeting will be held on 8th October before the Indoor Meeting.

## NTBC WEB SITE

The Club website is an excellent resource for all interested in birds in the north-east. There are numerous interesting sections, including a photograph gallery, site information and trip reports together with extensive reference information for birding in our area. Please submit any new content for the website to the main club email address.

## NTBC SIGHTINGS PAGE

The Sightings Page contains current reports by members. Access is from the NTBC website and an email notification is available for new postings. Members need to submit a request to be added to the website, specifying the email address they wish to post from before they can submit sightings to [ntbcorg@gmail.com](mailto:ntbcorg@gmail.com)

## GEOFF LAWRENCE BOOK COLLECTION

Geoff Lawrence, sadly, died recently. His wife, Pat, has asked me to help dispose of his collection of bird books. Among them are 95 Poyser titles, on which he was particularly keen. She would prefer that they go direct to like-minded people, i.e. other birders, rather than to a dealer. I have therefore priced them to be slightly cheaper than the lowest-priced copy in comparable condition on Bookfinder (which includes Amazon, Biblio, Alibris, Abebooks, etc.). I will be bringing the Poyser books to the November Club meeting, where they will be available to buy from the proceeds.

Alan Macfarlane  
07926 369140





# Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

<http://www.ntbc.org.uk/>

**Bulletin 2016 No 10**

**MONTHLY SUMMARY OCTOBER 2016**

**5th December 2016**



## CONTENTS

WeBS Coastal September and October

WeBS Inland –October

## CLASSIFIED LIST HIGHLIGHTS

Taiga Bean Goose	Two at Holywell Pond from 22nd to 30th.
Tundra Bean Goose	Single at Widdrington village on 21st.
Todd's Canada Goose	One with Barnacle Geese at Goswick from 25th to 28th.
King Eider	Well tracked sub-adult male North along coast on 23rd.
Great White Egret	Adult again at Druridge Pools and Cresswell Pond from 22nd to 24th.
Baird's Sandpiper	Juvenile seen first at Boulmer until 6th and then at Newton scrape from 7th to 25th.
White-rumped Sandpiper	Single reported from Boulmer on 28th.
Pectoral Sandpiper	Single juveniles at East Chevington on 1st and 2nd plus Monks' House Pool on 16th.
Hoopoe	Single at Warenford on 12th.
Isabelline Shrike	One at Half Moon Slack, Holy Island on 18th and 19th.
Great Grey Shrike	Several records as part of influx from 6th.
Firecrest	At least two on Holy Island from 15th to 20th.
Shorelark	Several records from 15th.
Pallas's Warbler	Influx from 8th to 16th.
Yellow-browed Warbler	Widespread influx during month.
Dusky Warbler	Popular long-stayer at Tynemouth from 14th to 22nd.
Siberian Chiffchaff	Several noted during month.
White's Thrush	Fantastic find on Straight Lonnen, Holy Island by visiting birder on 5th.
Red-flanked Bluetail	Singles at Bamburgh on 4th and Holy Island on 12th.
Red-breasted Flycatcher	Influx during month.
Isabelline Wheatear	One on Holy Island from 17th to 20th. Second County record with first in 1980.
Siberian Accentor	Singles on Holy Island on 17th and 25th plus Newbiggin on 30th. First County Records.
Richard's Pipit	One over Holy Island on 5th.
'Northern' Bullfinch	One on Holy Island calling on 24th.
Little Bunting	Several records as part of an influx during month.



A lifer for many – the White's Thrush on Holy Island on 5th October. By Tim Dean

## INDOOR MEETINGS

NTBC indoor meetings are held at Northern Rugby Club, McCracken Park, Great North Road, Newcastle, NE3 2DT starting at 7.00pm and generally finish between 9.00pm-9.30pm.

## SKOKHOLM ISLAND

8th December

Giselle Eagle and Richard Brown

The talk will be about the birds of Skokholm, and setting up the bird observatory on a small windy island of Wales.

## FLAMBOROUGH HEAD

12th January 2017

Birds and Conservation on Flamborough Headland by Richard Baines.

A exciting talk on the birds and work at this great white headland on the east coast of Yorkshire.

## CLASSIFIED LIST

**Mute Swan** *Cygnus olor*

70 were at QEII CP Lake on 28th (JMA); the Tweed Estuary held 57 on 12th (MHu), 25-36 were at Big Waters (GB), Holy Island causeway (JMA) and Howdon (on River Tyne; CB), and ten to 13 at Castle Island, Colt Crag Reservoir and Newcastle Exhibition Park.



Whoopers at Amble Weir by Chris Barlow

**Whooper Swan** *Cygnus cygnus*

Southerly movement involved 36 at Tynemouth (CB) and five to eight at Druridge (MSH) and St Mary's (ASJ) on 20th (CB), 11 at St Mary's on 28th (ASJ), 20 at Holy Island (MJC/ADM), 13 at Newbiggin (TRD) and ten (six juveniles) at St Mary's (PCF) on 30th, and three at Bedlington and Boulmer, while 20 flew E at Bowsden on 28th (TRD). Groups of ten to 20 were at Big Waters (per AJJ), Branton GP (IBDa/KDa), East Chevington (TRD/JD), Lindisfarne NNR (TRD) and Low Newton (TF/JFa), and five to eight were at/over Colt Crag Reservoir, Seaton Sluice and West Ord, and one to four at Bothal and Cresswell Ponds, Cragside, East Chevington, Ellington, Horncliffe and Newton Pool.

**Bean Goose** *Anser fabalis*

Two, of the 'Taiga' *fabalis* race, were at Holywell Pond on 24th (SPP) and 25th (CGK/GPK *et al.*) and one was with Pink-footed Geese at Widdrington Village on 21st (TB). Four geese that flew over Holy Island Snook on 10th were thought to be Bean Geese of the 'Tundra' *rossicus* race (MJC).

**Pink-footed Goose** *Anser brachyrhynchus*

About 8,000-9,000 moved N at Cocklawburn on 24th (MHu) and 100-110 N at Bedlington and Blyth. Southerly movement involved about 7,000 at East Ord on 19th (MHu), a total of 760 at Cocklawburn on 18th (MHu), 320 S at East Sleekburn on 19th (JR), 100-250 S at Ellington, Elswick, Hauxley, Holy Island, Howick and Newcastle Exhibition Park on various dates between 1st-16th, while 1,000 flew W at Shiellow Woods on 26th (MJC), and 120 E at Lowick on 19th (TRD/JD).

Large numbers in the north included 7,000 regularly at Lindisfarne NNR and with fresh arrivals heard at night on 26th-27th (IK), 5,300 at dawn Goswick Sands on 23rd (CGK/GPK/PS), 4,300 at an evening roost Budle Bay on 16th (CGK/GPK *et al.*), 3,500 at Doddington on 29th (JD), and 3,000 at Low Cocklaw on 24th (TBr). Further south, 2,300 were at Widdrington Moor Lake on 5th (STH), 2,000 at Cresswell Pond on 20th (TRD/JD) and 670 at Druridge Pools (IRD). Groups of 50-90 were at/over Barrasford, Berwick, Boulmer, Branton, Chollerford, Derwent Reservoir, East Ord, Gosforth Park, Hadston, Longhirst, Swinhoe and the Wansbeck Estuary on various dates, with smaller numbers at several further sites.

**White-fronted Goose** *Anser flavirostris*

One, of the Eurasian *albifrons* race, was at Horncliffe on 16th (JDL) and an un-raced individual was at Branton GP on 17th (IBDa/KDa).



**Greylag Goose** *Anser anser*

A group of 587 at Humshaugh on 19th contained a neck-collared bird from Windermere, Cumbria (summer 2015)(TWi). Other peak counts were 285 at Big Waters on 30th (GB), 284 at Budle Bay on 3rd (MSH), 200 at Hauxley on 22nd (HRS), and 56-100 at Bothal and Holywell Ponds, and Lincoln Hill. Groups of 23-38 were at/over Grindon Lough, Plenmeller Common and Prestwick Carr.

**Canada Goose** *Branta canadensis*

Peak counts were 265 at Grindon Lough on 20th (PRM), 223 at QEII CP Lake on 17th (CDH), 182 at Bothal Pond on 10th (TF/JFa), 102-114 at Haughton Strother GP (SW), Killingworth Lake (LJM) and West Ord (MHu), 64-88 at Gainslaw and Humshaugh, and 27-42 at Newcastle Leazes Park and Yarrow Slake.

An example of the *interior* race ('Todd's Canada Goose') was with Barnacle Geese at Goswick on 28th (RA/TRD).

**Barnacle Goose** *Branta leucopsis*

Eight to ten flew N at Bamburgh and Hauxley on 5th and 7th (ADM/IFo). 38-50 S at Holy Island (MJC) and St Mary's (MSH) on 5th (MJC) were followed on 6th by about 629-650 (in several flocks) over Holy Island (MJC/ADM/ASJ/PRM), and 344 (seven flocks) at Cocklawburn (MHu), 12-37 S at Berwick (MHu), Cresswell (TB), Old Hartley (MSH) and Warkworth Gut (NFO) on 15th (MSH), and 60-64 S at Berwick (MHu) and Holy Island (GB/IFo) on 18th-19th. A total of 600 were at Budle Bay on 6th (JMA), 850 roosted there on 8th (GPK) and 120 on 22nd (ASJ), about 500 were at Goswick on 28th (TRD), and 77 at Fenham Flats on 27th (JDL). One to seven were at/over East Chevington, QEII CP Lake, Snab Point and St Mary's Wetland.

**Brent Goose** *Branta bernicla*

Pale-bellied *hrota* race birds involved 300 at Lindisfarne NNR on 6th (TRD/JD) increasing to 2,700 by the end of the month (IK). Four flew N at Newbiggin between 1st-5th (STH), four S at Hauxley on 22nd (HRS), and singles were at Low Newton scrape, QEII CP Lake and Widdrington Moor Lake on single dates.

The only reports of dark-bellied *bernicla* race birds were one N at Tynemouth and one at Cresswell Pond.

Un-raced birds included 4,500 at the Fenham Flats section of Lindisfarne NNR (JPL *et al.*/NNBC), and 3,000 at Budle Bay on 11th (DGB).

**Shelduck** *Tadorna tadorna*

Budle Bay held a peak of 565 on 17th (CGK/GPK). Seven flew in to East Chevington north pool on 2nd (TB), and one flew N at Boulmer on 1st (GB). Two were inland at Grindon Lough on 18th (MRS).

**Mandarin** *Aix galericulata*

Single drakes were at Holywell Pond on 3rd (SPP) and Newsham Pond (Blyth) on 9th-10th (LJM).

**Wigeon** *Anas penelope*

At Newbiggin, 15 flew N on 2nd and 60 N on 10th (GB/STH). An estimated 17,000 were at Lindisfarne NNR by the end of the month (IK), Budle Bay attracted a peak of 2,100 on 7th (CGK/GPK), 1,000 were at Fenham Flats on 18th (MH/AA), 800 at Cresswell Pond on 20th (MSH), and 218-250 at Alnmouth (AJR), Big Waters (GB), Bothal Pond (TF/JFa), Gosforth Park NR (NHSN) and Grindon Lough (MRS), and 183 at Linton Ponds (CDH). Counts of 54-80 came from Shield on the Wall, Warkworth (offshore) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs. More unusual were eight on a golf course pond at Linden Hall on 16th (NFO) and one again at Tynemouth boating lake between 1st-6th (DRW).

**Gadwall** *Anas strepera*

Largest counts involved 84 at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN), 62 at Big Waters on 3rd (GB), 20 at Caistron on 8th (JD), 20 at East Chevington on 20th (TRD/JD), and ten to 12 at Castle Island (DM/STH) and Linton Ponds (CDH). Six were at Bothal Pond, three at Cresswell Pond and the Wansbeck Estuary, and one to two at Cocklawburn Pond, Druridge Pools and Widdrington Moor Lake.

**Teal** *Anas crecca*

A total of 26 flew N at Newbiggin on 2nd (GB), and six flew N at St Mary's on 2nd (MSH). Grindon Lough held a peak of 455 on 20th (PRM), 191 were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 17th (SR), 131 at Bothal Pond on 4th (TF/JFa), 105-106 at Castle Island (DM/STH) and Plenmeller Common (PRM), and 62-79 at Arcot and Linton Ponds, and Howdon. Counts of ten to 30 came from Big Waters, Gosforth Park NR, Hauxley Reserve, Holywell Pond and West Ord.

**Mallard** *Anas platyrhynchos*

138 at Derwent Reservoir on 4th (IFo) was the sole three-figure count received (IFo). Other peaks were 80 in a stubble field at Ellington on 1st (TB), 70 on the River Coquet at Warkworth on 26th (JMA), 54-65 at Bothal Pond (TD), Newsham Pond (LJM), Old Hartley (MNC) and West Ord (MHu), and 30-49 at Castle Island, Hauxley Reserve, Monks' House Pool, Newcastle Exhibition and Leazes Parks, Richardson Dees Park (Wallsend), the Tweed Estuary and Willington Gut. Ten to 27 were also at Berwick, the Blyth Estuary, Haughton Strother, Lemington, Linton Ponds, Newcastle Civic Centre, Plenmeller Common, Wark and West Ord.

**Pintail** *Anas acuta*

East Chevington north pool attracted good numbers (for the south of the county), with a peak of 23 on 29th (TF/JFa) and two to 22 regularly during the month. Budle Bay held a peak of 11 on 24th (TF/JFa), nine were at Branton GP on 1st (IBDa/KDa), and one to two at Big Waters, Gosforth Park NR, Fenham Flats and Newcastle Exhibition Park.

**Shoveler** *Anas clypeata*

Larger numbers were concentrated at East Chevington north pool, which held a peak of 63 on 1st (GB/LAR), and Swallow Pond, with a peak of 52 on 30th (GPK). Elsewhere, 18 were at Gosforth Park NR (NHSN), eight to nine at Budle Bay (GPK) and Grindon Lough (MRS), and four to five at Bothal Pond (TF/JFa), Linton Ponds (CDH). One to two were also at Arcot Pond, Big Waters, Druridge and Monks' House Pools, and Low Newton scrape.

**Pochard** *Aythya ferina*

Seven were at Bothal Pond on 18th (TF/JFa) and one to six on several further dates between 5th-25th, six were at Swallow Pond on 26th (GPK), three at Holywell Pond on 30th (MSH), and one at East Chevington.

**Tufted Duck** *Aythya fuligula*

Peak counts were 49 at Newcastle Exhibition Park on 3rd and 19th (GB/DM), 47 at QEII CP Lake on 17th (CDH), 39 at Bothal Pond on 10th (TF/JFa), and 21-24 at Castle Island, Cocklawburn Pond (MHu) and Ladyburn Lake (IFo). One to six were at Grindon Lough, Haughton Castle, Linton Ponds and Newcastle Leazes Park but more unusual were singles at the Blyth Estuary on 4th (LJM) and Budle Bay on 2nd (GPK).

**Scaup** *Aythya marila*

Two flew S at Tynemouth on 29th (DRW). Five were at East Chevington on 29th (TF/JFa) and one on 1st (GB/TF/JFa), three at Druridge Pools on 30th and one on 20th (TRD/JD), two at Cresswell Pond on 27th (IRD) and one on 20th-21st (TB/TRD/JD), and singles at Budle Bay on 24th (TF/JFa), and Ladyburn Lake on 21st (TB). Three visited Big Waters briefly on 13th (AJJ *per* GB), two were at Bothal Pond on 23rd (TF/JFa), one at Killingworth Lake on 13th (LJM), and one was further inland at Grindon Lough (no date; AJ).

**Eider** *Somateria mollissima*

About 30 were at Cocklawburn-Cheswick Sands on 30th (PHi/SSc), ten to 20 at Boulmer Steel, Meadow Haven and North Shore (both Berwick), and the Tweed Estuary (JMA/MHu). Four to eight were also at North Shields Fish Quay and Amble Harbour. One caught and ate a crab in the River Aln at Alnmouth on 1st (GB/LAR).

**King Eider** *Somateria spectabilis*

An immature drake was tracked along the coast on 23rd (having been first reported from Whitburn, Co. Durham). At 0902h it flew N past Newbiggin (GB/TF/JFa) and at 1110h it flew N off Holy Island (the seaward end of the Crooked Lonnen and then Emmanuel Head) (MJC/ADM/CGK/GPK/PS).

**Long-tailed Duck** *Clangula hyemalis*

Singles flew N at Snab Point on 9th (JL) and Newton Point on 22nd (SW). Four were at Fenham Flats on 21st (AJ/TW). Singles were at Castle Island on 16th (STH/DM) and QEII CP Lake on 17th (CDH).

**Common Scoter** *Melanitta nigra*

Light northerly movement involved a total of 37 at Newbiggin between 2nd-23rd (GB/STH), 25 at Hauxley on 22nd (HRS), and five at Cheswick (PHi/SSc). About 100 were at Spittal Bay, Newbiggin on 4th (LJM), 20 were at Cocklawburn-Cheswick on 30th (PHi/SSc) when 20 were off Chevington (TD). One to seven were also off Craster, Druridge and Newton Point. Singles visited Druridge Pools on 20th and 30th (TD/TRD/JD) and the Bondi Pool at Hauxley Reserve on 15th (HRS).

**Velvet Scoter** *Melanitta fusca*

At Newbiggin, four flew N on 2nd (GB) and one N on 12th (STH), while two flew N at Tynemouth on 2nd (DRW) and two S there on 21st (SPP). An unusual record concerned a female/immature bird on the north pool at East Chevington on four dates between 16th-23rd (JL *et al.*)

**Goldeneye** *Bucephala clangula*

Five flew N at Stag Rocks on 31st (BRS) and one N at Tynemouth on 29th (DRW). Seven were in Budle Bay on 14th (GPK), four to five at Branton GP (JD), Colt Crag Reservoir (SW), East Chevington (TRD/JD) and Whiteadder Point (R. Tweed; TBr) between 1st-24th, two to three at Grindon Lough, Shield on the Wall and the Tweed Estuary, and singles at Bothal, Cresswell and Swallow Ponds, West Ord and Widdrington Moor Lake.

**Red-breasted Merganser** *Mergus serrator*

Four flew N at St Mary's on 2nd (MSH). Modest numbers included five at East Chevington on 16th (JL), three at the Blyth Estuary on 8th (JL), and one to two at Boulmer, Cresswell Pond, Holy Island and the Tweed Estuary.

**Goosander** *Mergus merganser*

25 were at Branton GP on 1st (JD), 11 at the Blyth Estuary on 3rd (LJM), 11 at Thrum Mill, Rothbury on 4th (JMA), ten at Holy Island on 22nd (considered unusual for this late in the year; IK), and five to eight at Berwick, Castle Island and Foxton Bends. Three to four were also at Caistron, Hepple, Newcastle Exhibition Park and Rothbury, and one to two at Boulmer, Elswick, the Tweed Estuary and Wark.

**Red-legged Partridge** *Alectoris rufa*

35 were at Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay) on 7th (MNC) and a single was on Alnwick Moor on 17th (TRD/JD).

**Red Grouse** *Lagopus lagopus*

In the Cheviots, 33 were at Hedgehope on 5th (IRD) whilst in the Pennines, Plenmeller Common peaked at 26 on 1st

(PRM). The only other record was of a single bird at Gowk Hill (Rothbury) on 26th (TRD/JD).

**Black Grouse** *Tetrao tetrix*

A single male was at Muckle Moss (Bardon Mill) on 31st (SW).

**Grey Partridge** *Perdix perdix*

Several double-digit counts including a peak of 19 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 13th (SR), 18 at East Holywell on 30th (MNC), 14 at Beal on 9th (MJC/ADM) and Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 16th (TB), 12 at North Highmoor on 15th (NFO) and ten at Gosforth Park NR throughout the month (NHSN). One to nine were at several other easterly locations including four present on Holy Island.

**Pheasant** *Phasianus colchicus*

Three, comprising a male and two females - one of which was melanistic - were in the observer's garden at Fulbeck (Morpeth) on 16th (TD), an "unexpected" sighting of two females at North Blyth on 30th (STH), and a single melanistic male at The Snook (Holy Island) on 24th (GB).

**Red-throated Diver** *Gavia stellata*

By far the largest concentration was on 30th between Cocklawburn Beach – Cheswick Sands when a minimum of 40 birds were counted among a large spread of mixed divers and other species feeding in the bay during an incoming tide. The majority were in winter plumage but one was still in its summer finery (Phi/SSc). Elsewhere, one to eight were recorded from many locations all along the coast.

**Black-throated Diver** *Gavia arctica*

Two, in winter plumage, were in the mixed raft of birds between Cocklawburn Beach – Cheswick Sands on 30th (Phi/SSc) and a single was in the Ross Back Sands – Guile Point area on 21st (MJC).

**Great Northern Diver** *Gavia immer*

Three winter-plumaged individuals were scattered amongst other divers between Cocklawburn Beach – Cheswick Sands on 30th (Phi/SSc), whilst two, possibly three, were at Alnmouth on 28th (AJR). Singles were seen flying past three other locations, including one heading inland in a SW direction over Newbiggin on 30th (TF/JFa).

**Fulmar** *Fulmarus glacialis*

The only record was of two "blue phase" birds at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 14th (JPL *et al.*/NNBC).

**Sooty Shearwater** *Puffinus griseus*

11 were recorded past Newbiggin on 2nd (ASH), five flew N at St. Mary's on 2nd and a single flew N past Snab Point (Cresswell) on 5th.

**Manx Shearwater** *Puffinus puffinus*

Newbiggin peaked at 12 past Church Point on 2nd (ASH), otherwise only one or two birds were reported from several locations during the remainder of the month.

**Gannet** *Morus bassanus*

570 per hour S passed Berwick Pier on 23rd (MHu), 40 N past Newbiggin in one hour during the morning of 10th (STH) and 30 N past Hauxley in ten minutes on 22nd (HRS) were the only significant passage records. Several "feeding frenzies" were observed including 200 at Bamburgh Wynding on 11th (MH/AA), 60, mainly juveniles, at Emmanuel Head (Holy Island) on 13th (IK) and a group of 50 fishing off Budle Bay on 6th (JMA). Two to 20 were also reported from various other coastal localities.

**Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo*

75 were off Berwick Pier on 30th and 45 on the North Shields jetty on 27th (JMA). WeBS counts produced 46 at the River Tweed estuary on 12th and 39 at Berwick North Shore on 14th (MHu). 38 were in the high tide roost at Sandstell Point (Spittal) on 7th (MHu) and 22 at Derwent Reservoir on 1st (IFo). Castle Island peaked at 14 on 16th (DM) and one to ten were at many other localities. Two flew round Exhibition Park (Newcastle) several times on 5th without landing, the observer noting that he has never seen one land here in many years of watching (GB).

**Shag** *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) proved popular peaking at a minimum of 406 in a long line offshore on 31st (BRS). 22 were at the Meadow Haven (Berwick) roost on 27th and 12 were noted during a WeBS count at Berwick North Shore on 14th (MHu). One to six were noted elsewhere.

**Bittern** *Botaurus stellaris*

Numbers continued to rise at Gosforth Park NR with a minimum of four, and possibly five, present by the end of the month (NHSN/AJ/TW/GPK). A popular individual present on 18th at St Mary's wetland was a possible first for the site and appreciated by many observers, providing some exceptional views in full sun. A single was at East Chevington on 30th (TD).

**Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta*

The largest concentration was ten at Castle Island (River Wansbeck) on 9th (STH), followed by six at Cresswell Pond on 30th (TD). One to five were at 18 other sites including a first patch record at Prestwick Carr for the observer (PCF).



**Great White Egret** *Ardea alba*

An adult was at Druridge Pools on 23rd (TF/JFa) and was still present the following day (MSH) before later relocating to Cresswell Pond (TB) but not reported thereafter.

**Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea*

Numbers gradually rose throughout the month at Howdon, eventually peaking at an impressive 28 on 31st (CB). 20 were seen from the Royal Border Bridge (Berwick) on 30th (JMA), 14 were on North Blyth staithes on 22nd (STH) and nine were present during a WeBS count in the River Tweed Estuary on 12th (MHu). One to eight were reported from several other localities.

**Little Grebe** *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Peak counts were as follows:

Locality	Peak Count	Date	Observer/notes
East Chevington	24	16th	WeBS count (JL)
Castle Island	20	16th	(STH/DM)
Hauxley NWT	19	9th	(HRS)
Bothal Pond (Coney Garth)	16	10th	(TF/JFa)
Caistron	15	8th	(JD)
Foxton Bends (River Aln)	10	1st	(GB)
River Aln estuary	7	1st	(GB)
Cresswell Pond	7	20th	(MSH)
Druridge Bay CP	7	20th	(TRD/JD)

One to six birds were at several other typical localities.

**Great Crested Grebe** *Podiceps cristatus*

Three remained at Big Waters NWT all month (GB) and two were at Killingworth Lake on 26th. Single birds were at Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), Branton GP, Cresswell Pond, East Chevington, QE11 CP and Widdrington Moor Lake,

**Slavonian Grebe** *Podiceps auritus*

The first of the winter was an excellent inland record from Branton GP, present from 17th-31st (IBDa/KDa *et al.*/NNBC/JD). One was feeding with Eiders N of St. Cuthbert's Island (Holy Island) on 22nd and further singles followed at Saltpan Rocks (Cocklawburn) and Stag Rocks (Bamburgh).



The inland Slavonian Grebe at Branton GPs  
by Janet Dean on 17th October

**Red Kite** *Milvus Milvus*

A single bird drifting W over Chapel House (Newcastle) on 31st (MH) was a first in 40 years.

**Marsh Harrier** *Circus aeruginosus*

Once again most sightings came from the Druridge Bay area with single a juvenile and a single female on several dates. The only sighting away from the Druridge Bay area was a juvenile migrating SSW at Quarry House Moor on 18th (AA/MH).

**Hen Harrier** *Circus cyaneus*

Two birds including an adult male and a juvenile female with a satellite aerial visible were at a confidential site on 10th and 30th (MH). On 9th a ringtail left The Snook (Holy Island) heading N gaining great height (MJC/ADM), and another ringtail was at a site on 20th (PRM) and a male was at a different site on 28th (ALT).

**Goshawk** *Accipiter gentilis*

A female and a juvenile were seen over different moors on 30th (MH).

**Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter nisus*

An adult male and a juvenile female were regularly present and roosting in the observer's garden on Holy Island throughout the month (IK). Two birds were at Woodhorn Church on 9th (STH) and at Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay) on 14th (MNC). Single birds were noted at 15 sites during the month.

**Common Buzzard** *Buteo buteo*

Seven birds were at The Winter's Gibbet (Harwood Forest) on 9th (JR), five were at Prestwick Carr on 21st (MH), 4 birds were seen at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 2nd (STH) and at Aydon (Corbridge) on 14th (RB/MB). Three birds were noted at Lesbury on 10th (JMA) and at Ellington on 11th (TB). One or two birds were recorded at over 20 sites.

**Osprey** *Pandion haliaetus*

A bird was at Hedgeley GPs on 17th (IBDa/KDa).

**Water Rail** *Rallus aquaticus*

Three plus birds were noted at Gosforth Park NR throughout October (NHSN) and two birds were at Cresswell Pond on 29th (TF/JFa). Single birds were noted at Backworth, Cresswell Pond, East Chevington, Hauxley, Holy Island, and Holywell Pond. On 15th at Holy Island a bird flew in from high and landed in the coach park before running under a wall (TF/JFa).

**Moorhen** *Gallinula chloropus*

32+ birds were at Castle Island on 16th (STH/DM), 24 were at Low Newton scrape on 11th (MH/AA), 20 were at Big waters NWT on 3rd (GB), 15 at Gosforth Park NR during the month (NHSN) and 12 were at Hauxley on 22nd (HRS). One to nine birds were at Arcot Pond, Ellington Pond, Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Jesmond Dene (Newcastle), and Leazes Park (Newcastle), QEII CP and at Richardson Dees Park (Wallsend).

**Coot** *Fulica atra*

Big Waters NWT had 103 birds present on 17th (GB) and 100 birds were at East Chevington on 30th (TD). QEII CP had 27 on 17th (CDH) and Gosforth Park NR peaked at 22 birds during the month. One – nineteen birds were at Arcot Pond, Bothal Pond Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Leazes Park (Newcastle) and Linton Ponds.

**Avocet** *Recurvirostra avosetta*

All records came from Cresswell Pond. Two birds were reported on 2nd (STH). Thereafter only reports of a single bird (possibly the same individual and with an injured leg) were made up to the 20th.

**Oystercatcher** *Haematopus ostralegus*

Over 420 birds were recorded at Holy Island, St Cuthbert's Island on 15th (ASJ). Other large counts were 218 at Berwick North Shore on 14th (MHu) and 167 on the rocks at Tynemouth on 22nd (CB). Further records were: 48 in the Tweed estuary on 12th (MHu), 37 at Hauxley NR on 1st and 26 there on 9th (HRS), ten at Boulmer on 1st (DM). Smaller counts came from Cheswick Black Rocks and Derwent Reservoir.

**Golden Plover** *Pluvialis apricaria*

Holy Island provided the largest reported counts with an estimated 2,500 but with no date provided (SP). Counts of 2,000+ were reported on the island on 18th and 20th (ADM and ASJ, respectively) and similar numbers were seen for much of the month. Elsewhere 1,500 birds were seen at St Mary's on 20th (ASJ), while a minimum count of 848 was made on 20th at Grindon Lough (PRM) and ca. 600 were reported from Druridge Farm on 21st (JR). Six hundred were also seen at Boulmer on 25th (TRD/JD) and ca. 500 observed at St. Mary's on 16th (DLo) with a similar number at Monk's House Pool on 28th (TRD). Budle Bay held 300 birds on 31st (JD), 220 were at Derwent Reservoir on 1st (IFo), and 150 flew over Low Newton scrapes on 12th (TRD), as well as 100 birds on Newcastle Town Moor on 6th (GB). Smaller counts came from Berwick pier, Billy Law and Ord Moor, Bothal Pond, Cocklawburn, Craster, Cresswell Pond, Ellington, Greenhead and Plenmeller.

**Grey Plover** *Pluvialis squatarola*

A very notable 110 birds were counted at Budle Bay on 11th (GPK). All other reports were of ten or fewer birds and came from Aln estuary, Berwick Estuary and North Shore, Blyth Estuary, Boulmer, Budle Bay, Cocklawburn, Hauxley, Holy Island, Low Newton, Tynemouth and Warkworth.

**Lapwing** *Vanellus vanellus*

Reports suggested relatively small gatherings compared with previous Octobers. The largest count came from Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) on 16th when 470 birds were reported (TD). Other counts in excess of 100 came from Whittle Dene Reservoirs (420 on 13th, SR), Throckley Fell (300 on 23rd) PCF), Grindon Lough (250 on 18th, MRS), Monks' House (250 on 21st, JR), Greenhead (200 on 3rd, SW), Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) on 23rd had 198 (TF/JFa), Cocklawburn (180 on 18th, MHu), Netherton Park (150 on 30th, JMA), St. Mary's (120 on 23rd, ASJ), Heiferlaw, Alnwick (100 on 6th, JMA). Smaller counts came from: Blyth, Laverock Hall, Castle Island, Coquetdale, Little Tosson, Denwick, Ellington, Chugdon

Wood, Goswick, Howdon, Lemington (R. Tyne), Plenmeller Common, Prestwick Carr, Rockcliffe/ Cullercoats, Silloans Farm and St Mary's.

**Little Ringed Plover** *Charadrius dubius*

There were no reports.

**Ringed Plover** *Charadrius hiaticula*

There were only four reports of counts which reached double figures: 45 at Cresswell, Snab Point on 9th (CB), 41 at St. Mary's on 17th (ASJ), 36 at Berwick, Little Beach on 9th (MHu) and 14 at Hauxley on 8th (HRS). Smaller counts came from Boulmer, Low Newton scrape and R Wansbeck, Castle Island.

**Whimbrel** *Numenius phaeopus*

Two sightings of late birds were made. On 5th a single was both heard and well seen at Holy Island, The Snook (TRD). An even later bird was seen on 30th at Cambois railway line, when it flew from the power station pools towards the Blyth estuary. The bird called several times and showed very well (STH).

**Curlew** *Numenius arquata*

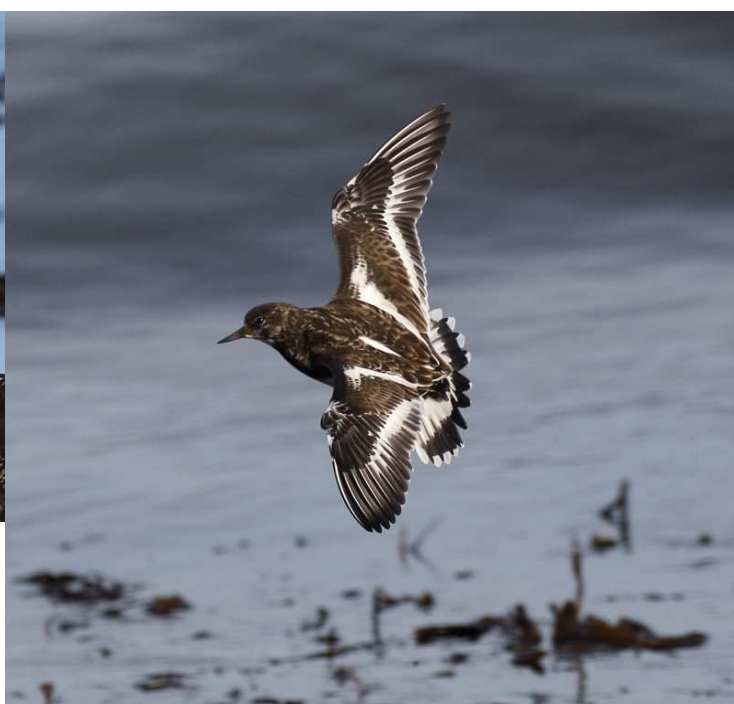
St Mary's held the largest reported count of ca. 150 on 16th (DLo) with a smaller count of 117 made at the same place on 23rd (ASJ). Foxton Bends (R Aln) held 98 on 1st (GB), while 71 birds were counted on a stubble field at Amble Links on 2nd (MH) and the same number was seen at Hauxley on 16th (HRS). Other double-figure counts came from the Tweed Estuary (52 on 12th, MHu), Howdon (44 on 31st, CB), Newbiggin, Spital (43 on 15th, GB), Coquetdale, Little Tosson (40 on 9th, JR), Berwick North Shore (22 on 14th, MHu). Single-figure counts were reported from Big Waters NWT, Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), Cheswick Sands and Plenmeller Common.

**Black-tailed Godwit** *Limosa limosa*

Although the peak of September's passage had passed, there were still significant numbers reported. Twenty four birds were seen at both Monks' House Pool and the Blyth Estuary on the 3rd (MSH) and 8th (JL), respectively. As the month progressed, numbers at Monks' House Pool decreased to 22 on 18th (DGB), 16 on 24th (MSH) and four on 28th (TRD). Twelve birds were found at Howdon on 31st (CB) and eleven in the Blyth Estuary on 8th (LJM) with ten at Hauxley on the same day (HRS) and ten at Druridge Pools on 30th (TD). Other sightings came from the Aln estuary, Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), Boulmer, Castle Island (R Blyth), Druridge Pools, Foxton Bends, R Aln, Holy Island, Low Newton and further counts from Monks' House Pool.

**Bar-tailed Godwit** *Limosa lapponica*

The largest count was 380 at Lindisfarne on 15th (ASJ) and 200 were reported earlier on Holy Island, on 6th (TRD/JD). A count of 35 was made on 3rd at Boulmer (TRD) and one of 20 was made at Budle Bay on 31st (JD). The only other two-figure counts were of 16 birds at Berwick North Shore on 14th (MHu) and of ten at Boulmer on 17th (TRD/JD). Further counts came from Beal Point, Berwick Little Beach, Boulmer, Cheswick Black Rocks, Cresswell Snab Point, Hauxley, Holy Island, Low Newton and the Tweed Estuary.



Two waders show characteristic wing patterns  
above: a Bar-tailed Godwit by Chris Barlow  
and right: a Turnstone by Alan Jack

**Turnstone** *Arenaria interpres*

Boulmer attracted the largest number with 80 on 17th (TRD/JD). Other concentrations were 50 at Snab Point (Cresswell) on 30th (TRD), 42 at Berwick North Shore on 14th (MHu), 25 at Hauxley NWT on 1st and 20 at the River Tweed Estuary on 12th. One to fifteen were at five localities between Low Newton and Calot Shad (River Tweed Estuary).



**Knot** *Calidris canutus*

The highest gathering by far was 2,000 at Holy Island flats on 9th (TRD/JD). The only other significant flock was 30 at Cresswell Pond on 30th (TRD). One to three were at Beal Point (Lindisfarne), Boulmer, Budle Bay and Hauxley.

**Ruff** *Calidris pugnax*

Birds had mostly moved on from last month leaving a maximum of four at Druridge Pools on 1st (TF/JFa) with one left by 30th (TD). Two were at Charlton Mires (North of Alnwick) on 5th. Singles were at East Chevington and Foxton Bend on 1st.

**Curlew Sandpiper** *Calidris ferruginea*

A few birds persisted following the autumn influx with one at Boulmer on 1st increasing to two on 6th (PRM/GB *et al.*) One was at the Aln Estuary on 1st (GB) and the last was at Berwick Pier on 16th (BWG).

**Sanderling** *Calidris alba*

The flock at St Mary's Island remained from last month with a maximum of 170 recorded between 1st-20th (SPP/ASJ/AJN). At Budle Bay 125 were counted on 8th (CGK/GPK). Chevington Burn mouth attracted 67 on 25th (MH), 62 were at Boulmer on 28th (AJR) and 60 at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) on 2nd (IJ). Twenty five or less were seen at Berwick Little Beach, Cheswick Sands, Cocklawburn, Cresswell (Scarr Rocks and Pond), Hauxley, Holy Island and Newton.

**Dunlin** *Calidris alpina*

Flocks which have been present in Budle Bay since August increased to 550 on 11th (GPK). At Boulmer, 120 on 3rd had reduced to 30 by 25th (TRD). In the Berwick area 36-64 were at North Shore, Yarrow Slake and Little Beach from 9th-29th (MHu/BWG). Elsewhere 38 were at Castle Island (River Wansbeck), 30 at Holy Island, 20 at Beal Point (Lindisfarne) and 20 at Cresswell Pond. One-twelve were at Bothal Pond, Cheswick Sands, Druridge Pools, Hauxley, Low Newton and Monks' House Pool.

**Purple Sandpiper** *Calidris maritima*

Stag Rocks was the favoured haunt with the highest count of 41 made on 31st (BRS). Thirteen were at Tynemouth on 22nd (CB) and ten at Berwick Pier on 17th (BWG). Two-ten were at Boulmer, Brown's Bay (Cullercoats), Cocklawburn and Hauxley.



The Boulmer Baird's Sandpiper with a Dunlin  
by Tim Dean on 2nd October

**Baird's Sandpiper** *Calidris bairdii*

Another nearctic sandpiper for the county this autumn, with a juvenile appearing at Boulmer on 1st remaining to 3rd (IF/MJC/DGB *et al.*) It apparently relocated to Low Newton scrape where it was first identified on 7th and last reported on 25th (TRD/JD/IBDa/KDa *et al.*)

**Little Stint** *Calidris minuta*

Only one was reported this month with a juvenile at Low Newton scrape on 1st (GPK).

**White-rumped Sandpiper** *Calidris fuscicollis*

One at Boulmer on 28th may have been the bird last reported at Castle Island in September (AJR).

**Pectoral Sandpiper** *Calidris melanotos*

A juvenile was reported from East Chevington on 1st- 2nd (IF/SRB/TRD/JD). It or another was seen at Monks' House pool on 16th (NNBC).

**Common Sandpiper** *Actitis hypoleucos*

One at Tynemouth on 1st was the only report for this month (DRW).

**Green Sandpiper** *Tringa ochropus*

Birds were seen at Whittle Dene Reservoirs up to 13th with a maximum of three recorded (SR/AA/STH). Two were at Hedgeley GP on 31st (SMA). Singles were seen at Big Waters, Blagdon and near Lambley (South Tyne).

**Spotted Redshank** *Tringa erythropus*

The two adults seen at Budle Bay last month remained until 18th (GPK *et al.*). Two were at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 27th (JDL). Singles were seen at Beal, Druridge Pools and flying over the causeway at Holy Island between 1st-8th.

**Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia*

Numbers were reduced from last month but birds were still well reported. At Cresswell Pond, there were three on 15th but only one by 30th (TB/TRD/JD/*et al.*). Two were at Beal and West Ord (Berwick) from 2-21st (MHu/IBDa/KDa). Two were also at Bothal Pond, Castle Island (River Wansbeck) and Holy Island. Singles were reported from Boulmer, Druridge Pools, Gosforth Park NR and Mootlaw Quarry (Ryal).

**Wood Sandpiper** *Tringa glareola*

Late autumn stragglers through the county were reported with singles at East Chevington North Pool on 1st (GB/TF/JFa), Bothal Pond on 4th and 16th (TD) and the last at Horncliffe on 26th (JDL).

**Redshank** *Tringa totanus*

WeBS counts in the Berwick area revealed 214 on 12th at the River Tweed Estuary and 52 at the North Shore on 14th (MHu). 30-35 were at Berwick Pier and Whitesand Shiel on 30th (JMA).

Other counts were 169 at Howdon on 23rd (CB), 70 at Cresswell Pond on 9th (IRD) and 62 at Hauxley NWT on 1st (HRS). A little further inland 20 were at Foxton on 19th, 19 at Newcastle Business Park (River Tyne), three flew around Big Waters before leaving and three were at Castle Island.

**Jack Snipe** *Lymnocyptes minimus*

More birds arrived after last month's single at Gosforth Park with a maximum of four at this site often showing well (NHSN). Four were at Holy Island during the month with birds at The Snook, Straight Lonnen, Castle and Strawberry field (IBDa/KDa/MJC/*et al.*). One at St Mary's Wetland on 15th increased to three by 29th (AC/CB). Singles were seen at Big Waters, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Hauxley, Holywell Pond, Woodhorn and probing a manure heap at Swallow Pond.

**Woodcock** *Scolopax rusticola*

Birds were reported regularly at Holy Island from 7th-30th with a maximum of nine on 15th. They were reported from the Snook, Straight Lonnen, Chare Ends, Excavations and Village. Three were at Hauxley on 16th (HRS). Singles were seen at Big Waters, Cresswell, Ellington, Newbiggin (Spital and Mound) Prior's Park (Tynemouth) and Woodhorn Church.

One came in off the sea at St Mary's Island on 10th (ASJ).

**Snipe** *Gallinago gallinago*

High numbers remained at Castle Island (River Wansbeck) from September with 36 counted on 9th (STH). Other counts of 30 and over were 32 at Big Waters on 21st (GB *per* AJJ), 30 disturbed by a Marsh Harrier at Druridge Pools on 14th (MH/AA) and at least 30 at St Mary's Wetland on 29th (CB). Six were at Hauxley, five at Woodhorn and Hauxley. Four or fewer were at Arcot Pond, Backworth, East Chevington, Gosforth Park NR, Grindon Lough, Holy Island, Howdon, Low Newton, Monk's House Pool and Shield on the Wall.

One flew N over Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 5th (GB).

**Pomarine Skua** *Stercorarius pomarinus*

A single N, off Snab Point (Cresswell) on 9th was the only report (JL).

**Arctic Skua** *Stercorarius parasiticus*

On 6th single pale phase and dark phase birds moved N at Holy Island (IK). Other northbound singles were at Cresswell and Newbiggin on 5th and 20th (JL/STH/JR). Two flew S at North Blyth on 11th (STH). One flew E at Snipe Point, Holy Island on 7th (MJC).

**Long-tailed Skua** *Stercorarius longicaudus*

An adult was seen at Newbiggin on 2nd (ASH).

**Great Skua** *Stercorarius skua*

Numbers picked up from last month. At Tynemouth three flew S on 1st, five flew N and three 'lingered' on 2nd (DRW/SPP). Four were seen at Newbiggin on 2nd (ASH) and also at St Mary's Island four flew N in one hour between 07:30-08:30(MSH). Three flew very high NW at Newbiggin on 2nd (GB). Singles were seen at Snab Point (Cresswell ) on 8th, Stag Rocks on 14th and flying N at Holy Island on 23rd.

**Puffin** *Fratercula arctica*

Two flying N at St Mary's Island on 2nd was the only reported sighting (MSH).

**Razorbill** *Alca torda*

Four were noted between Cocklawburn Beach and Cheswick Sands on 30th (Phi/SSc).

**Little Auk** *Alle alle*

One sheltered from rough seas in the lee of the pier at Berwick Meadow Haven on 11th (MHu).

**Guillemot** *Uria aalge*

At Hauxley, 70 flew N in 10 minutes on 22nd (HRS), eight were at Cocklawburn on 6th (MHu) with one to five at six other widespread localities from Berwick to Cresswell Snab Point, on dates throughout the month.

**Sandwich Tern** *Sterna sandvicensis*

The latest record was seven which roosted on St Cuthbert's Island on 15th (MJC). Elsewhere, six moved S at Boulmer on 1st (DM/PJA/ASJ) with a similar number S at Cresswell Snab Point on 9th (JL), up to three also at Boulmer on 2nd-3rd (TRD) and two at Newbiggin on 2nd with a single at North Blyth staithes on 11th (STH).

**Common Tern** *Sterna hirundo*

A single record only, of three at Budle Bay on 17th CGK/GPK).

**Kittiwake** *Rissa tridactyla*

At Newbiggin on 1st, 70 were counted offshore in late afternoon (STH) and on 11th, ten were at Bamburgh (MH/AA) with two at Berwick Meadow Haven and in the Tweed Estuary on 12th and 27th respectively (MHu).

**Black-headed Gull** *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

Big Waters NWT hosted 1,000 on 10th (GB/AJJ) and three-figure counts of 100-250 came from Bothal Pond, Castle Island, Chollerford, Exhibition Park, QE II CP Lake and Smeafield (JMA/DM/STH/TD/CDH/GB). Smaller gatherings of 50-100 were at Arcot Pond, Berwick (North Shore), Jesmond Dene, Leazes Park and the Tweed Estuary (DM/MHu/MJCo) with up to 50 at six other sites (JMA/DM).

**Franklin's Gull** *Larus pipixcan*

The last sighting of this extremely rare visitor was on 1st at Whittle Dene Reservoirs (Birdguides).

**Mediterranean Gull** *Larus melanocephalus*

Well-reported as usual although numbers this month were much reduced from September. During the first three days, maximum counts of up to ten came from Ellington (TB) and up to five at Boulmer (MSH/CGK/TF/JFa); three were regularly seen at Newbiggin (STH/TF/JFa/ SRB) with one-two at six other sites, namely Cresswell, Holy Island, Holywell Pond, the River Blyth Estuary, St Mary's Wetland and Tynemouth (DRW/SR/AH/JL/TB/SPP/JFa/TF/CB).

**Common Gull** *Larus canus*

A flock of 172 was at Netherwitton on 9th (JR) but few were reported elsewhere comprising only 24 in the Tweed Estuary on 12th (MHu) and up to ten at Arcot Pond, Berwick North Shore, Castle Island and Jesmond Dene.

**Lesser Black-backed Gull** *Larus fuscus graelsii*

An unseasonably large gathering of 90, probably due to favourable September weather conditions, was recorded at Branton GP on 1st (JD), 13 were on the River Tyne (Elswick Wharf-Newcastle Business Park) on 4th (DM) with seven in Budle Bay on 3rd (MSH); elsewhere, up to mid-month, singles were at Cramlington, Dinnington, Jesmond Dene and Prestwick Carr with a late record of one in Budle Bay on 23rd.

**Herring Gull** *Larus argentatus argenteus*

A WeBS survey in the Tweed Estuary on 12th included 516 (MHu) and 500 were in Budle Bay on 6th and 300 at Stagshaw on 11th (JMA). Four localities, Arcot Pond, Berwick North Shore, North Shields Fish Quay and Tynemouth, held 50-100 (MHu/DM/JMA) with up to 40 at seven other widespread localities.

**Great Black-backed Gull** *Larus marinus*

A low-tide gathering in the River Wansbeck Estuary included 200 on 30th (STH), 150 were in Budle Bay on 6th (JMA) and 90 at North Blyth on 30th (STH). Smaller groups of around 60 were reported from Budle Bay (MSH) and Castle Island (DM) with up to 30 at Berwick North Shore, North Shields Fish Quay, St Mary's Island and the River Tweed Estuary.

**Feral Pigeon** *Columba livia*

85 fed at Big Waters NWT on 30th (GB), 45 at Morpeth on 21st (PCF) with 38 at Bigg Market (Newcastle) on 17th and 30 there on 3rd (DM).



**Stock Dove** *Columba oenas*

Large pre-roost gatherings at Howdon with 55 on 23rd rising to 118 on 31st with 48 there on 2nd (CB). Elsewhere nine at Prestwick Carr on 9th, one at High Carrick on the same date and one at Jesmond Dene on 30th.

**Woodpigeon** *Columba palumbus*

A high count of 150 at Arcot Pond on 13th (STH), 67 pre-roost at Howdon on 31st (CB), 50 at Stannington Station on 30th and 20 at Alnmouth on the same date (JMA). Strong SW movement of 500-600 was noted on 29th (IK) with six to nine at Jesmond Dene and Warkworth.

**Collared Dove** *Streptopelia decaocto*

At Dinnington 14 were gathered on 18th with nine on 5th (PCF) and four at Hauxley on 8th and 22nd (HRS).

**Barn Owl** *Tyto alba*

Singles seen at Holy Island from 8th to 25th with a second brood hatched early September presumed predated by a Stoat which had been seen in rafters nearby (IK). On 20th singles were at Plenmeller Common and Ashington New Moor with one at Cresswell Pond on 25th & 29th. Road casualties on the A1 near South Charlton on 5th and two near Alnwick on 15th (GB/ASJ).

**Little Owl** *Athene noctua*

One was at Woodhorn Church on 8th and near Big Waters NR on 30th (GB/DM/LAR).

**Tawny Owl** *Strix aluco*

Two males and a female called at Halton Shields (near Stagshaw) on 5th (MJC) with two calling all month at Fulbeck (Morpeth) (TD) and Humshaugh on 26th (SW). Singles called at Pauperhaugh (Rothbury) and Valley Park (Cramlington) on 2nd, Wark (North Tyne) on 8th, Dinnington on 30th and Ellington on 31st.

**Asio sp** One went over Whitley Bay Community gardens on 15th (IJ).

**Long-eared Owl** *Asio otus*

One at Holy Island on 5th, 10th and 21st (SR/AH/IK).

**Short-eared Owl** *Asio flammeus*

Three at Holy Island on 7th (MJC/ADM) with two there on 8th and 22nd (TFa/JFa/ASJ) and two (one 'in off') at Warkworth Gut on 15th (NFO). Singles seen regularly at Holy Island from 6th at Druridge Pools and 'in off' at Tynemouth on 5th, Tynemouth on 8th, Bamburgh Castle on 11th, Cambois, Snab Point (Cresswell) and St Mary's Island on 15th, Church Point (Newbiggin) on 20th and the only inland record at Plenmeller Common on the same date.

**Hoopoe** *Upupa epops*

One was found at Warenford on 12th (JHa).

**Kingfisher** *Alcedo atthis*

A peak count of two at Gosforth Park NR with two chasing at Big Waters NWT on 27th and singles on various other dates (NHSN/GB). Singles were on the coast at R. Blyth Estuary, Cresswell Pond, Howick, Tynemouth, St Mary's Island and inland at Branton GP, Holywell Pond, Jesmond Dene, Scotch Gill Woods (Morpeth), Ponteland, Thrum Mill (Rothbury), Wark and Whittingham.

**Green Woodpecker** *Picus viridis*

Just one report of a single at Shiellow Woods on 26th (MJC).

**Great Spotted Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos major*

Only two reports of two at Netherwhitton on 4th and Valley Park (Cramlington) on 15th (MNC/DM). Singles were at 15 other widespread localities. At Bamburgh a British race juvenile was trapped and ringed on 3rd and an adult on 8th (BRS).

**Ring-necked Parakeet** *Psittacula krameri*

A count of five at Heaton Park Bowling Green on 2nd (MJCo) and five W over Exhibition Park at 16.30 on 13th with two E there at 08.30 on 5th (GB). Singles were at Jesmond Dene on 3rd and Whitley Bay Cemetery on 4th (GB/AJ).

**Falcon sp**

A Saker hybrid flew W over Tynemouth Pier on 15th and it was also seen flying N over Longsands on 22nd (DRW).

**Kestrel** *Falco tinnunculus*

Holy Island had a total of up to four birds present during the month (IK/ADM/MJC). Three birds were at Coldwell on 1st (SW) and two birds were at Plenmeller on 1st, Derwent reservoir on 4th and at Whittle Dene reservoirs on 13th. There were 27 sightings of single birds.

**Merlin** *Falco columbarius*

Two birds, a male and a female, were noted at different times on 30th at Cheswick Steads (Phi/SSc). All other sightings involved singles at Beal Point (Lindisfarne), Boulmer, Cresswell Pond, Elwick, Holy Island, North Sunderland (Seahouses), Ross Back Sands and at Snab Point (Cresswell). A female was still at an inland site on 20th (PRM).

**Peregrine** *Falco peregrinus*

Two birds were at Holy Island on 15th (TF/JFa) and at East Sleekburn on 21st (JR). Single birds were at Boulmer, Branton, Budle Bay, Chugdon Wood (Ellington), Cresswell Pond, Fenham Flats, Holy Island, Howick Dene, Newbiggin, Newton Point, Rockcliffe, Ross Back Sands, Tynemouth and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.



A Peregrine at Boulmer shore on 1st October photographed by Jonathan Farooqi

**Isabelline Shrike** *Lanius isabellinus*

One was at Half Moon Slack (Holy Island) on 18th and 19th (IF *et al.*).

**Great Grey Shrike** *Lanius excubitor*

Two were at Holy Island from 6th till 12th with a single remaining till 16th (IK/RA *et al.*). One found at Prestwick Carr on 8th remained till the month end (PCF *et al.*) with one at Bewick Moor on 10th remaining till 30th (MH).

**Magpie** *Pica pica*

16 at Howdon on 9th (CB), five at Willington Gut (Wallsend) on 26th and three at Jesmond Dene on 2nd (MJCo).

**Jay** *Garrulus glandarius*

Well reported with four the peak at Bedlington, East Sleekburn and Gosforth Park NR (AJ/TW/JR). Two of three were ringed at East Sleekburn on 1st with three at Derwent Reservoir on 4th (IFo) and Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 16th (TB). One to two were at 19 other widespread localities.

**Jackdaw** *Corvus monedula*

An evening roost at Big Waters NWT numbered 200 on 6th (GB) with 50 at Heddon on the Wall on 11th and Shiremoor on 27th, 30 at Otterburn Mill on 11th, 25 at Canongate (Alnwick) on 6th (JMA) and four at Jesmond Dene on 30th.

**Rook** *Corvus frugilegus*

A high count of 120 upstream of R.B.Bridge at Berwick on 30th, 75 at Bilton on the same date, 50 at Heddon on the Wall on 11th, 25 at Canongate (Alnwick) on 6th (JMA) with two at Holy Island on 2nd.

**Carriion Crow** *Corvus corone*

38 flew E over the Snook (Holy Island) on 13th (MJC), 30 in field at Hauxley on 13th (HRS), 25 at North Shields Fish Quay Car Park on 27th (JMA), 18 at Beaconhill (Cramlington) on 16th (DM) and two to six at Bakethin, Jesmond Dene and Shaftoe.

**Raven** *Corvus corax*

On 9th three were at Winters Gibbet (Harwood Forest) (JR), two W at Linnshield on 19th (TWi) and singles at Hepburn Woods and Ladies Bridge (Rothbury) on 31st.

**Goldcrest** *Regulus regulus*

The largest influx in recent years at Holy Island commenced around the 5th/6th peaking between 13th/16th with 393 the high count on 15th, counts of 301 on 13th, 274 on 14th and 201 on 16th with counts over 100 from 8th (MJC/ADM/IK). 250 were at Hauxley on 15th of which 53 were ringed and 200 on 16th with 43 ringed (HRS).

Elsewhere on the coast 100 at St Mary's Island on 15th, 85 at Budle Point on 13th and 50+ at Cresswell on 8th, Tynemouth on 15th and Rockcliffe / Cullercoats on the same date. One to 40 were reported from all the above and 21 other localities with 80 trapped and ringed at Bamburgh during the month and nearly 100 records submitted. The peak inland count, Woodhorn Church excluded, was four at Cramlington and Prestwick Carr.



A Goldcrest from the influx on Holy Island by Tim Dean on 5th October

**Firecrest** *Regulus ignicapillus*

All reports from Holy Island with singles at Churchyard / Vicar's garden on 15th (IK/ASJ) and the Snook from 18th to 20th (*per NNBC et al.*).

**Blue Tit** *Cyanistes caeruleus*

Two trapped and ringed at Hauxley on 15th/16th (HRS) with two at Rockcliffe on 16th, Hauxley on 22nd and Jesmond Dene on 23rd.

**Great Tit** *Parus major*

At Jesmond Dene three on 16th and two at Rockcliffe on the same date (MJCo/IJ).

**Coal Tit** *Periparus ater*

A high count of six at Craster on 24th (MJC), five the peak at Hauxley on 8th with one at Grindon Lough on 20th and Jesmond Dene on 30th.

**Willow Tit** *Poecile montanus*

Three at Prestwick Carr on 1st and Craster on 24th with up to three using the feeding station at Big Waters during the month (PCF/MJC/GB). Two were at Derwent Reservoir on 2nd (IFo), Prestwick Carr on 10th (TB) and Backworth on 29th (GPK). One was retrapped at Hauxley on 1st (HRS) with singles at Craster on 4th, Cramlington on 25th and Swallow Pond on 31st.

**Marsh Tit** *Poecile palustris*

Just one report of a single at the regular location of Linden Hall (Longhorsley) (NFO).

**Skylark** *Alauda arvensis*

Movement S noted at Holy Island with 103 on 9th, 53 on 15th and 42-50 on four dates from 1st to 30th (MJC/ADM), 90 at St Mary's Island on 21st (ASJ) and 40 at Hauxley on 22nd with 19 to 26 on three dates from 8th to 16th. 29 were at Little Mill on 22nd, 20 at Newton on 11th and two to 18 at 16 other widespread locations.

Correction record omitted from September bulletin

50+ at Holy Island on 19th, 24 at St Mary's on 24th and 12 at Ingoe Moor on 18th(ASJ).

**Shore Lark** *Eremophila alpestris*

On 21st three including a male still in breeding plumage were at Wideopen (Ross Back Sands) (MJC), with singles in field at Cresswell / Lynemouth on 15th (JL) and over St Mary's wetland calling on 23rd and 29th (ASJ/AC).

**Sand Martin** *Riparia riparia*

Nine still at Hedgeley GP on 17th (IBDa/KDa) and one at Holy Island on 8th (TF/JFa).

**Swallow** *Hirundo rustica*

Recorded throughout the month with 75 mainly juveniles at Elwick on 1st (ASJ), 40 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 2nd (STH), 25 at Prestwick Carr, 18 at Humshaugh, 14 at Derwent Reservoir all on 1st (PCF/SW /IFo) with 12 south at Budle Point and Cresswell / Druridge Pools on 17th (CGK/PGK/MH). One to nine were at 15 other locations till 17th with singles at Cresswell on 21st (TB), Holy Island and Swallow Pond on 30th (MJC/ADM/GPK).

**House Martin** *Delichon urbica*

On 1st 16 flew S at Humshaugh (SW), six were at Priors Park (Tynemouth) on 3rd and Woodlands Walk (Alnwick Garden) on 5th (CB/JMA), four at Wark (N.Tyne) on 11th and Hauxley on 15th (PRM/HRS) with one to three at Branton GP, Ellington, Holy Island, Lynemouth and Prestwick Carr between 1st and 8th.



**Long-tailed Tit** *Aegithalos caudatus*

21 were trapped and ringed at Bamburgh on 21st (BRS), 20 were noted at Wark (North Tyne) on 2nd (PRM) and 19 were at Hauxley on 8th (HRS). Elsewhere flocks of 12-15 were reported from Blyth Estuary, Coldwell (North Tyne), East Holywell, East Sleekburn, Hadston Links and Howick Dene, with 11 at East Cramlington LNR, Howdon and Prestwick Carr. Ten were at Valley Park (Cramlington) and four to eight at a further six localities.

**Pallas's Warbler** *Phylloscopus proregulus*

This increasingly rare Siberian gem was noted in good numbers in October, during an extraordinary arrival of eastern vagrants. Holy Island hosted at least six, beginning with two (Snook House and the Vicar's garden) on 8th (TF/JFa) and two, including a different bird (Snook and Straight Lonnen) on 9th (MJC/ADM). Another was found at Chare Ends car park on 12th (AH), while from 14th-16th birds were noted at Half Moon Slack and Snook House (MJC/ADM). Elsewhere, singles were reported from Low Newton (Tin Church) on 12th (TRD), Budle Point on 14th (GPK) and Hauxley and Tynemouth on 15th (HRS/AC/MSH/DRW). Reports of singles from the St Mary's Island-Old Hartley area from 14th-16th may have involved two birds (AC/MSH/DLo).



A Pallas's Warbler from Holy Island  
15th October  
Mike Carr

**Yellow-browed Warbler** *Phylloscopus inornatus*

Although no longer the rarity it was, October 2016 was unprecedented, with a total of 70 records received, many of which were of multiple birds. There was a significant arrival during the first week of the month with peak day counts from Holy Island of six+ on 2nd, five on 5th, eight on 6th, nine on 7th, seven on 8th and five on 9th (MJC/ADM/SR/AH/TF/JFa); singles here on 10th, 12th-16th and 22nd involved at least two and probably three or more different individuals. Elsewhere during this period, six were at Craster on 4th (MJC), five at Hauxley on 8th (HRS) and three+ at Budle Point from 8th-10th. Two (possibly four) were noted at Tynemouth on 2nd (DRW) and two were at Howick Dene from 3rd-4th. At Bamburgh one of two was ringed on 6th and two ringed on 8th. At St Mary's Island there were two on 2nd (ASJ) and a single on 3rd and 5th. Two were reported from Tynemouth on 8th (one on 9th) and Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 9th while elsewhere singles were noted at Berwick (Flagstaff Park), Brier Dene Farm, Cambois, Druridge Bay CP, Druridge Pools, Low Newton, Newbiggin, Newcastle Business Park (8th), Prior's Park and Woodhorn Church.

Later in the month singles were at Alnmouth on 12th, Newbiggin, Tynemouth and Woodhorn Church on 15th; three were at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay-IJ) and a single at Hauxley on 16th, singles were at Prior's Park on 19th and Beal on 23rd and two were at St Mary's Island from 25th-26th (ASJ).



A Yellow-browed Warbler from Holy Island on 8th October by Jonathan Farooqi

**Dusky Warbler** *Phylloscopus fuscatus*

One at Prior's Park (Tynemouth) from 14th-20th (DRW *et al.*) was followed by another at Holy Island (near Vicar's garden) on 22nd (MJC).



The Prior's Park Dusky Warbler  
by Colin Bradshaw  
16th October



**Chiffchaff** *Phylloscopus collybita*

The peak day counts from Holy Island included 20+ on 8th (TF/JFa), 12 on 14th, 50+ on 15th and 27 on 16th (ASJ/MJC/ADM), with up to nine on a further 13 dates. At Hauxley there were counts of six on 1st, 16 on 8th and nine on 15th (HRS), while more unusual was a large inland count of 12 at Harwood Village on 9th (JR). Nine were at Craster on 4th (MJC), six at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) on 15th and four at Prestwick Carr on 1st, Priors Park (Tynemouth) on 8th and St Mary's Island-Old Hartley on 15th. Up to three were at St Mary's Island on a further six dates and three were also noted at Bamburgh on 6th, Coldwell and Derwent Reservoir on 1st and Howick Dene on 4th. One to two were reported from a further 18 coastal and 14 inland localities.

Two birds showing characteristics of **Eastern-type** *P.c.abietinus* were at Holy Island on 14th (ADM), with one of this type also noted on 15th (ASJ).

Single birds showing characteristics of the **Siberian form** *P.c.tristis* were at Holy Island on 7th, 13th and 16th, the latter from different observers possibly referring to two different birds (Crooked Lonnen and Snook - MJC/TF/JFa). Another was at Craster on 24th (MJC).

**Willow Warbler** *Phylloscopus trochilus*

Singles were at Druridge Bay CP and Holy Island on 2nd, Holy Island (Snook) from 5th-8th, Holy Island and Prestwick Carr on 10th, Budle Point on 14th, Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) on 15th, St Mary's Island on 17th and Holy Island (Chare Ends) on 20th.

A single bird showing characteristics of the **Eastern form** *P.t.acredula* was at Holy Island on 30th (MJC/ADM).

**Blackcap** *Sylvia atricapilla*

Counts at Holy Island during the mid-month 'fall' included 11 on 14th, 38 on 15th and 19 on 16th (MJC/ADM). On the latter date ten were noted at Hauxley (HRS), while nine were at Bamburgh on 6th (BRS) and at Budle Point on 15th (GPK). There were counts of seven from Old Hartley-St Mary's Island and five at Cambois on 15th with one to four from a further 12 coastal localities during the first two weeks of the month. There were four inland birds with singles at Branton GP on 1st, Derwent Reservoir on 6th, Gosforth on 17th and Exhibition Park on 21st.

**Garden Warbler** *Sylvia borin*

Singles were at Bamburgh on 6th, Holy Island on 6th and 8th, Newbiggin on 15th and Hauxley on 16th.

**Barred Warbler** *Sylvia nisoria*

Six individuals were reported during the month, beginning with one at Prior's Park (Tynemouth) on 5th (CB). Singles were at Holy Island and St Mary's Island on 15th (NFO/AC) with others reported from Cambois on 22nd (GB), St Mary's Island on 24th (NPD/AJ) and Tynemouth on 25th (SPP).

**Lesser Whitethroat** *Sylvia curruca*

One to two were reported daily on Holy Island from 6th-16th and two were at Hauxley on 8th. Elsewhere during the month singles were noted at Cambois on 5th, Bamburgh on 8th, Budle Point on 13th, Druridge Pools on 14th, Newbiggin, Newbiggin (Spital) and Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) on 15th, Hauxley on 16th, Druridge Pools on 20th and Craster on 24th. One of the two birds at Hauxley on 8th showed many features of the **Central Asian form** *S.c.halimodendri* (MJC/IF/MD).



A Mike Carr image of the potential halimodendri (Desert) Lesser Whitethroat on 28th Oct 2016 from Hauxley



**Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

One was at Holy Island (Snook House) on 12th (PRM).

**Waxwing** *Bombycilla garrulus*

The first arrival was a single at Holy Island on 24th (TF/JFa). Two flew W at Shiellow Woods on 26th (MJC), one was 'fly-catching' at Corbridge on 29th (MR) and another was at Holy Island on 30th.

**Nuthatch** *Sitta europaea*

Four were noted in Jesmond Dene on 2nd (MJCo). Elsewhere, one to two were reported from Berwick (Castlehills), Coldwell and Haughton Castle (both North Tyne), Leazes Park, Nunwick Hall and Mill and Rothbury.

**Treecreeper** *Certhia familiaris*

Hauxley RS had a re-trap on 1st and singles ringed on 9th and 16th. Two were noted at Humshaugh and Prestwick Carr, while singles were also at Haughton Castle (North Tyne), Hepburn Woods and Woodhorn Church.

**Wren** *Troglodytes troglodytes*

At Holy Island there were reports of four to 11 on many dates, with peak day counts of 14 on 7th, 21 on 16th, 25 on 25th and 43 on 30th (MJC/ADM). Elsewhere, 18 were at Ross Back Sands-Guile Point on 21st (MJC), 15 at Bamburgh on 6th (MJC/ADM), 13 at Prestwick Carr on 29th (PCF), 11 at Craster on 24th and five to nine at Hauxley on three dates. Two to five were reported from a further four localities.

**Starling** *Sturnus vulgaris*

The regular roost at Holy Island (Lough) numbered up to 20,000 (IK). Elsewhere 5,000 roosted in a conifer plantation at Haltwhistle on 28th (SW) and a flock of 3,000 were gathered in a field at Doddington on 29th (JD). A count of 2,500 N over Budle Bay on 16th were probably heading for the Holy Island roost (CGK/GPK), while 1,000 flew W over the Snook (Holy Island) on 10th (MJC). Two other gatherings of 1,000 were noted at Haltwhistle (Waterhead) on 25th (SW) and Grindon Lough on 18th (MRS), while 500 were at nearby Brocolitia on 27th. Flocks totalling 450 flew E at Prestwick Carr on 28th, 250 were at Heddon-on-the-Wall on 11th and 200 at Smeafield on 30th and Silloans Farm (Rochester) on 9th. Flocks of 100-150 were also noted at Alnmouth, Alnwick, Big Waters and Hauxley with ten to 50 at a further nine localities.

**Dipper** *Cinclus cinclus*

All reports this month were of singles, at Fulbeck (Morpeth), Howick Hall, Jesmond Dene, Nunwick Hall, Rothbury, Scotch Gill Woods (Morpeth) and Wark (North Tyne).

**White's Thrush** *Zoothera dauma*

The Willow Carr on the Straight Lonnen (Holy Island) attracted one of the finds of the year on 5th. The bird was found by a visiting birder from Manchester. It showed well at times and was well photographed. This will be the third county record following singles at Holy Island in 1914 and the Farne Islands in 2012.

White's Thrush

Holy Island

by Jack Bucknall on 5th October

**Ring Ouzel** *Turdus torquatus*

It was difficult to know just how many were on Holy Island during the month, although the first was a single/singles at the Snook on 5th and 6th (MJC/PRM); two were noted on the island on 6th (SR) and two were on the Crooked Lonnen on 7th (MJC). Another was at the Snook on 12th (ADM) and three were with Blackbirds in the Straight Lonnen on 13th (IK). A minimum of three were present on 15th (TF/JFa/MJC/NFO) and another on 29th. Elsewhere, two were at Budle Point on 7th (GPK), while singles were reported from Gosforth Park NR on 3rd (NHSN), Tynemouth on 5th (DRW/DLo), Hauxley and St Mary's Island on 8th (HRS/SPP), Lynemouth on 9th (JL), Backworth and Budle Point on 12th (SPP/GPK), Ellington and Newbiggin on 15th (TB/GB) and Widdrington on 18th (AH).



**Blackbird** *Turdus merula*

On Holy Island there were various counts of 45-53 from 7th-10th, rising to a peak of 235 on 15th (MJC), with a similar increase at Hauxley, from 67 on 8th to 220 by 15th (HRS). Elsewhere, peak counts included 40 at Prior's Park (Tynemouth) on 9th (CB), 40+ at Bamburgh on 12th, 32+ at Newbiggin on 8th and 25 at Cambois and 20 at Woodhorn Church on 15th. Counts of 17 came from Harwood Village on 9th and Ross Back Sands-Guile Point on 21st.

**Fieldfare** *Turdus pilaris*

The largest counts were 2,000+ at Holy Island on 15th (AJ) and 800 at Doddington on 29th (JD); 100 flew SW over Kenton on 15th, while on the same day 50 were at Cramlington LNR and at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay), 20 at Hauxley and 17 at Newbiggin. Later in the month a flock of 25 was found at Aydon (Corbridge) on 31st.



A Fieldfare arrival at Beal on 28th October by Tim Dean

**Song Thrush** *Turdus philomelos*

The peak count for Holy Island was 261+ on 6th (PRM), rising from a more modest 55 on the previous day (MJC), with 43 here on 7th (MJC) and 50+ on 8th-9th (TF/JFa/PHi); at nearby Budle Point 45+ were noted on 7th (GPK). Later in the month another influx produced 149 at Holy Island on 15th (MJC) and 46-54 at Hauxley on 15th-16th (HRS). Smaller numbers passing through elsewhere included, 20+ at Bamburgh on 8th, 15 at Cambois on 15th, ten+ at St Mary's Island on 14th and ten at Cambois on 5th, Woodhorn Church on 15th and at Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) on 16th. One in a Gosforth garden 13th-17th was the first here in months (AJN).



A Song Thrush migrant on Holy Island 6th October by Mike Carr



**Redwing** *Turdus iliacus*

There was a count of 653 at Holy Island on 7th, followed by 200-216 here from 8th-14th. A passage of 120 moved S/SW over Exhibition Park on 7th. Hundreds were noted moving SW over Marden Estate (Whitley Bay) on 14th (ASJ), followed by a large influx on 15th which saw 1,500+ arrive at Holy Island (ASJ), 510 were at Hauxley (HRS), 380+ at Budle Bay (GPK), 200 moved W at Brunswick Green, at least 150 were at East Cramlington LNR and 100 at Cambois. On the following day 450 were at Holy Island and 300 at Hauxley. Later in the month 200 were at Doddington on 29th and 109 at Holy Island on 30th. Elsewhere during the month flocks of 30-96 were reported from Backworth Pond, Bamburgh, Brier Dene Farm, Blyth, Halton Shields (Corbridge), Hedgehope, Morpeth, Prestwick Carr and Silloans Farm (Rochester), with up to 24 at a further 22 widespread localities.

**Mistle Thrush** *Turdus viscivorus*

Seven at Exhibition Park on 4th was the largest gathering (GB). Six were noted at Silloans Farm (Rochester) on 9th, while three were reported from Humshaugh and Ross Back Sands-Guile Point. One to two were noted at a further seven localities.

**Spotted Flycatcher** *Muscicapa striata*

Singles were at Holy Island on 6th (PRM) and Woodhorn Church on 9th (STH).

**Robin** *Erithacus rubecula*

Holy Island witnessed a large influx with 62+ on 6th (PRM) and up to 150 across the island on 8th (ASJ). Later in the month a second wave of migrants arrived, when 200 at Hauxley on 15th had reduced to 45 on the following day (HRS) and 116-139 were on Holy Island daily from 14th-16th (MJC/ADM); lesser numbers were on the island on various dates to the month end. At total of 50 were ringed at Bamburgh during the month, where the highest day counts were 17 on 6th and 15+ on 12th and 16th (BRS). More widely, 24 were at Craster on 24th, 22 at Howick Dene on 3rd, 21 at Ross Back Sands-Guile Point on 21st and 20+ at Snab Point (Cresswell) on 8th and at Old Hartley-St Mary's Island on 15th. Elsewhere 14-16 were reported from Cambois, Newbiggin and Prestwick Carr and three to ten at a further five localities.



A Robin on Holy Island  
10th October by Mike Carr

**Red-flanked Bluetail** *Tarsiger cyanurus*

A 1st-winter was trapped and ringed at Bamburgh on 4th (BRS) and another 1st-winter was seen well, albeit briefly, at Holy Island (Snook) on 12th (PRM).



**Red-breasted Flycatcher** *Ficedula parva*

The bird found at Holy Island (Snook) in September remained in the area until 2nd (MJC/ADM). Another was at Whitley Bay on 3rd (ASJ), while back on Holy Island one at the Straight Lonnen on 6th (PRM) remained until 8th, with two present here on the latter date (IBDa/KDa/TF/JFa). Other singles were at Prior's Park (Tynemouth) on 8th (DRW) and Woodhorn Church on 8th-9th (GB/LAR/DM). Another was at Holy Island on 15th (ASJ/BDa/KDa).



A Red-breasted Flycatcher at Half Moon Slack, Holy Island, on 2nd October by Chris Barlow

**Pied Flycatcher** *Ficedula hypoleuca*

One at Hauxley RS on 8th was the only record.

**Black Redstart** *Phoenicurus ochruros*

One at Holy Island (Snook) on 7th (MJC) was followed by two (possibly three) on the island on 15th (AJ/TF/JFa). Another was at Snab Point (Cresswell) on 15th (JL) and two were at Budle Point on 16th (CGK/GPK).

**Redstart** *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

At Holy Island singles were noted on 5th and 6th, while up to three were noted daily from 7th-9th (MJC/TF/JFa/IK) and one to two from 12th-18th. Elsewhere, singles were at Craster on 4th and at Snab Point (Cresswell) on 8th with a final record of two from Big Waters on 19th.

**Whinchat** *Saxicola rubetra*

There were two on Holy Island on 2nd (SR/AH) and singles at Gosforth Park NR on 14th (NHSN) and Budle Point on 16th (CGK/GPK).

**Stonechat** *Saxicola rubicola*

The peak monthly counts included eight at Ross Back Sands-Guile Point (MJC), six from Amble-Hauxley (HRS), six between Goswick-Cheswick (Phi/SSc), five from Stag Rocks-Budle Point (ADM) and five at Prestwick Carr (MH). Counts of four came from Boulmer, Holy Island, Newton, North Blyth and Old Hartley and three were noted at Arcot Pond, Cocklawburn, Cresswell Pond, St Mary's Island, Warkworth Gut and Whitley Bay. One to two were also reported from Alnwick Moor, Bamburgh Castle dunes, Bewick Moor, Cambois, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Lynemouth, Monks' House Pool and Tynemouth.

**Wheatear** *Oenanthe oenanthe*

The peak count from Holy Island was six on 16th (MJC), with two to three there on 1st, 6th-7th and 15th. Three were also at Budle Point on 16th, two at Boulmer on 17th and one at Newton Point on 7th. Inland singles were noted at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 2nd, on the summit of Hedgehope on 5th and at Derwent Reservoir on 6th. The final report of the month was from Holy Island on 19th.

**Isabelline Wheatear** *Oenanthe isabellina*

A single near Snipe Point (Holy Island) from 18th-20th was yet another exceptional October find for the island (IF/AC *et.al.*). This will be the second county record, following the first in September 1980 at Bamburgh GC.



The well-watched Isabelline Wheatear from Snipe Point, Holy Island by Colin Bradshaw on 16th October

**Dunnoek** *Prunella modularis*

12-21 were counted on four dates during the month at Hauxley, with seven birds ringed(HRS). A total of 13 also trapped and ringed in October at Bamburgh (BRS). 11 were noted at Ross Back Sands on 21st(MJC). One-five at five further sites.

**Siberian Accentor** *Prunella montanella*

An unprecedented influx into Europe resulted in a County first, soon after the British first in Shetland, with an individual of the species found on the north shore of Holy Island on 18th by a visiting birder from Doncaster. The very confiding bird was viewed at times from one metre distance. (IBDa/KDa/IF/ASJ/MJC *et al.*). The bird was not seen again until remarkably it, or another, was re-found on the island on 25th, a short way inland from the original site (ADM). Then on 30th, yet another was discovered at Newbiggin Ash Lagoon, remaining only one day after its discovery It allowed those who missed the Holy Island bird to connect with this ultra-rare species.(AT).

Siberian Accentor

Holy Island, the first for Northumberland

18th October

Alan Jack





Siberian Accentor  
Newbiggin Ash Lagoons

the third for Northumberland

30th October by Tim Dean



**House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus*

Around 140-150 were at a regular farm site at Elwick on 18th and 60-70 at the farm at Straight Lonnen (Holy Island) same day. 60+ at Holywell during the month (ASJ). 50 also reported at Holy Island village on 24th (GB). A Low Cocklaw garden held around 45 on 24th (TBr). 40 at Ropery Bank (North Shields) on 26th and 20 at three sites in Berwick and one site at Alnwick (JMA). 12-20 also in gardens during the month at Chapel House (Newcastle) and Marden Estate (Cullercoats). More unusually, four flew W over Snook (Holy Island) on 1st (MJC).

**Tree Sparrow** *Passer montanus*

A large feeding flock of 80-90 was attracted to set aside field edge at Elwick on 18th (ASJ). 60 were around Hauxley on 8th (HRS) and 40 at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 15th (TB). Passage was evident at St. Mary's on 17th with small southbound flocks totalling 33 noted, with a flock of 16 also heading south on 26th (MSH/ASJ). One to 14 were at 18 further widespread sites during October, including unusually, two in a Rothbury garden and two at Crooked Lonnen (Holy Island).

**Yellow Wagtail** *Motacilla Flava*

There were three records of late birds this month. One was at Lynemouth on 9th (GB/AB), St Mary's south beach on 30th (ASJ/SPP) and one at Branton on 31st (IBDa/KDa).

**Grey Wagtail** *Motacilla cinerea*

Three were at Jesmond Dene and Hauxley in the first week and at Ouseburn (Byker) on 11th. One to two were noted at 49 other widespread locations during the month.

**Pied Wagtail** *Motacilla alba*

Gatherings of 24 were at Berwick Golf Course on 9th and 23 at St. Mary's south beach on 31st were notable (MHu/ASJ/SPP). 11 were at Hauxley on 8th (HRS). Six were at Holy Island village on 2nd (MJC/ADM). Singles only reported from two further sites.

**Richard's Pipit** *Anthus richardi*

One flew over Snook House (Holy Island) calling on 5th (MJC).

**Olive-backed Pipit** *Anthus hodgsoni*

A calling bird flying over Straight Lonnen (Holy Island) on 13th was thought almost certainly to be this species, but it did not linger (MJC).

**Tree Pipit** *Anthus trivialis*

Single passage migrants noted on Holy Island on 6th at Snook and 9th at the village (MJC).

**Meadow Pipit** *Anthus pratensis*

120 flew SE over Snook (Holy Island) on 1st, with 126 moving through the Island on 13th (MJC). 60+ fed along the tideline at St. Mary's on 30th before moving off S and 35 were feeding at Snook (Holy Island) on 15th (ASJ). 35 also on Snook on 9th (MJC/ADM). 25 were at Hauxley on 16th. One to eighteen were observed at ten further sites with most birds moving S.

**Rock Pipit** *Anthus petrosus*

Well reported this month with an impressive total of around 126 birds seen. A total of 35 birds were counted across five locations on Holy Island on 20th (ADM). 16 at Berwick Pier on 15th rested above a very high tide (MHu). 13 were at Ross Back Sands/Guile Point on 21st (MJC). Nine to 12 fed at St. Mary's Island on beaches on several dates (ASJ). 12 were at Snipe Point (Holy Island) on 19th (TB). Tens were seen at Boulmer on 17th and Hauxley on 22nd (TRD/JD/HRS). One to six were also noted at eight further coastal sites during the month.





A Rock Pipit at Boulmer by Tim Dean on 2nd October

**Brambling** *Fringilla montifringilla*

The 13th saw 90 arrive on Holy Island in several flocks (MJC). More arrived the following day, with 50+ feeding in the Strawberry field, 30+ at Chare Ends and many smaller groups resting in village trees (IK). The 15th saw a larger arrival on the island. Over 400 birds were involved. 200-220 were in one flock were feeding in stubble near the main car park and 255 noted in the village may have included these birds. 60 of these preened in one bush (ASJ/TFa/JFa/MJC). 80 arrived from the east to drop into one tree in Vicar's garden, before flying off SW towards the mainland (ASJ). 60+ fed in the Strawberry Field (ASJ/TFa/JFa). Several smaller flocks were seen throughout the day on the island at for example, Chare Ends and Straight Lonnen.

Inland at Great Whittington, at least 100 fed on Beech Mast on 21st (MH per AH). On 15th, 31 were noted and a single ringed at Hauxley, where 15 had arrived on 8th. Elsewhere, one to six were noted at this time at 31 further locations throughout the county as the arrival continued.

A Brambling has a preen

by Alan Jack on 15th October Holy Island



**Chaffinch** *Fringilla coelebs*

A minimum of 30 were on fields at East Cramlington LNR on 15th (STH). More unusually, at least 20 were in a Tynemouth garden on 9th (CB). Two to eight at three other sites.

**Bullfinch** *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Six were at Prestwick Carr on 9th and 12th (PCF). Five were in a Morpeth garden on several dates and at Howick Dene on 3rd. Four at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 2nd and at East Sleekburn on 28th. One to three were noted at 11 further sites. Birds of the Northern race were seen at St. Mary's Wetland on 23rd (1) and 26th (a pair) and at Holy Island on 24th (1) (AC/ASJ/TF/JFa).

**Greenfinch** *Chloris chloris*

Two flocks totalling 100 birds were at Hauxley on 8th, with 21-35 there on several other dates (HRS). Ten were at Snab Point on 9th and two flew S at Craster on 24th.



A Linnet at Tynemouth by Colin Bradshaw

**Linnet** *Carduelis cannabina*

Some impressive large gatherings this month, with the biggest found at Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay) on 7th numbering 320 birds increasing to 720 by 14th (MNC). 420+ were attracted to set aside at Elwick on 18th and 22nd (ASJ). 280-300 fed at Chare Ends (Holy Island) on 8th (ASJ). While 140 were feeding in stubble at St. Mary's on 7th, increasing to around 200 by 20th (ASJ). 100 were at Snook on 9th and 10th (MNC) and 100 also at Prestwick Carr on 8th (PCF). 72-75 were also seen at Snook on 6th and 12th (PRM). 70 were at Nunwick Mill on 23rd (SW). 50 at Snab Point on 9th and Budle Bay on 6th (GB/JMA). Two to 43 were seen at 11 further sites during the month.

**Twite** *Carduelis flavirostris*

At Snook (Holy Island) the first arrivals were four birds seen on 10th increasing to eight the following day and 30 by 23rd (MNC/IK/PS/CGK/GPK). Numbers built and 60-64 were found there on 25th and 30th (MNC/ADM). 35 also reported from the island on 29th (IBDa/Kda). 24 were found at Goswick on 28th (TRD). 14 were seen at Druridge Pools on 30th (TD). Two-eight were found at a further three locations.



Two Twite at Goswick on 28th October by Tim Dean



**Redpoll sp** *Carduelis caberet/flammee*

On 9th, six flew south at Hauxley and five at Budle Bay. Four were at Woodhorn on 16th and one to three noted at four other sites.

**Lesser Redpoll** *Carduelis caberet*

20+ were at Bamburgh on 3rd (BRS). Eight flew S at St. Mary's on 30th (ASJ). Seven were on Snook (Holy Island) on 14th (ADM). Four were at Snook House on 12th and at Druridge, flying north on 20th (PRM/MSH). One to three seen at seven further sites during the month.

**Common Redpoll(Mealy)** *Carduelis flammee*

12 in Holy Island village on 16th was the largest party recorded during an influx. Ten had been seen here on 12th briefly pausing before moving S (IK). Further sightings from four locations on the island totalling ten birds also made on 16th, and six to nine birds from three locations the previous day (MJC/ASJ/TF/JFa). Six fed among weeds at St. Mary's on 12th, with a single here on 26th and also on this date, three were seen at Shiellow Woods (ASJ/MJC). One to three birds were also noted on several further dates during October at Holy Island, Craster, St. Mary's and Tynemouth.

**Crossbill** *Loxia curvirostra*

A large number totalling 75 appeared to come in off the sea and head W over Shiellow Woods on 26th (MJC). Seven at Craggside on 14th increased to ten on 28th (JD). Seven also at Big Waters on 30th (GB per AJJ). Two flew W at Bamburgh on 31st (BRS). A single flew N calling over Shiremoor on 29th and one was seen in College Valley on 30th (ASJ/JD).

**Goldfinch** *Carduelis*

Good numbers present all month at Bamburgh, with a maximum of around 200 on 4th. 90 were trapped and ringed during the month (BRS). 52 at Prestwick Carr on 10th and 48 at St Mary's on several dates were the largest flocks seen elsewhere this month (PCF/ASJ). 40 were at West Hartford on 15th and 37 at Howdon on 23rd (STH/CB). 25 were noted at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) and in Whitley Bay on 21st (GB/ASJ). Four to 22 were at Budle Bay, Newburn, Cambois, Berwick, Holy Island and Boulmer and five further sites during the month (PCF/JMA *et al.*).

**Siskin** *Carduelis spinus*

A large flock of 300 had newly arrived at Craggside on 28th (JD). 29 moved NW in small groups at Bamburgh on 31st (BRS). 25 were at East Sleekburn on 29th(JR). On Holy Island, 20 flew south on 30th and five arrived from the east to feed near the Vicar's garden on 15th (MJC/ASJ). 15 flew S at Hauxley on 8th, with a single in gardens here (HRS). One to ten were noted at seven further locations.

**Snow Bunting** *Plectrophenax nivalis*

The first of the Autumn was a single flying S over Snook (Holy Island) on 6th (MJC). Single birds were also seen on the island on five further dates, with two seen on three dates. Four were observed at Ross Back Sands on 21st, with two still present on 29th (MJC/NNBC). Two were in Embleton Bay on 26th (NNBC) and singles also at Budle Point on 24th and Cheswick on 30th.



A Snow Bunting on Holy Island by Colin Bradshaw



**Lapland Bunting** *Calcarius lapponicus*

The first report was of one along the shore at Beal on 1st and 2nd (ASJ/IBDa/KDa). This was followed by a single at Snook (Holy Island) from 6th–9th and again on 22nd (ASJ/PRM/MJC). Two were reported at Holy Island on 29th (IBDa/KDa). A single was found on a path at Low Steads (Longhoughton) on 25th did not linger before flying S (TRD/JD).

**Yellowhammer** *Emberiza citronella*

Well reported this month. On 16th feeding flocks of 25 and 24 were seen near the public hide at Holywell and at Backworth respectively. At least 18-20 at Elwick on 18th were in a large mixed flock of finches and buntings at set-aside field edge (ASJ). 20 were found at Little Mill on 22nd (SW). 16 noted at Craster on 24th (MJC). 13 at Beacon Lane (Cramlington) on 16th with five there on 25th (DM/STH). 12 were at East Holywell on 6th (MNC). Six were seen at Ross Back sands on 21st and four at Humshaugh on 1st (MJC/SW). Five were seen at Spindlestone on 8th and more unusually, four at "The Mounds" St Mary's on 20th (ASJ).

**Little Bunting** *Emberiza pusilla*

The 8th of the month produced a mini-influx of this rare species with single birds found at St. Mary's Wetland, Hauxley and Hadston Links (AC/MJC/IF/JR/NA).

**Reed Bunting** *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Another well reported species for the month, with 35 at Old Hartley on 9th and 19 nearby at St. Mary's on 20th. These counts probably involved some overlap (MNC/ASJ). 30+ were at Budle Point on 7th (GPK). Possibly up to 65-70 were present on Holy Island during the month, with a minimum total of 26 seen at various sites including Straight Lonnen, Crooked Lonnen, Chare Ends and the village on 15th (ASJ), 22+ on Snook on 12th (PRM) and 17 at The Lough on 7th (MJC) and 10 in "Northern dunes" on 18th (ASJ). 10+ noted again at St Mary's/Old Hartley on 13th and 16th (MSH/ASJ). Six to twelve were seen on various dates at several Holy Island locations and one to six at a further eleven sites during the month, including unusually, a single at Newcastle Town Moor on 6th (GB).

**ESCAPES, HYBRIDS AND BIRDS OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN****Escapes****Bar-headed Goose** *Anser indicus*

Again several records with the first on Holy Island on 7th (SR), followed by two at Humshaugh on 19th and nearby Lincoln Hill on 21st (TWi). Finally there was presumably the Holy Island bird at Goswick in with wild Barnacle Geese on 28th (TRD/JD). This unfortunately made the Todd's Canada Goose also in with the Barnacles seem less wild !

**Cockatiel** *Nymphicus hollandicus*

Single over fields to west of St Mary's wetland on 22nd (SPP).

**Hybrids****Saker / Gyr hybrid** *Falco Cherrug / Rusticolus*

The Saker type hybrid seen last month at Lindisfarne may well have been responsible for the sightings of a large Saker type hybrid seen at Tynemouth on 15th (DRW) and Cambois on 22nd (GB). Again a bell/ jesses could be made out.

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**Apologies for any accidental omissions****BULLETIN COMPILATION AND PRODUCTION**

This bulletin was compiled by Graeme Bowman (Mute Swan to Ruddy Duck), Steve Laing (Red Grouse to Black-necked Grebe), Trevor Blake (Honey-buzzard to Crane), Tom Brewis (Avocet to Godwit), Clive Hampton (Turnstone to Skua), Eddie Crabtree (Puffin to Great Black-backed Gull), Tim Dean (Escapes, Hybrids and Unknown Origin, List of Contributors, Highlights), Peter Fletcher (Feral Pigeon to Red-rumped Swallow), Mike Richardson (Cetti's Warbler to Pied Flycatcher), Alan Jack (Dunnock to Corn Bunting), Kathy Evans (WeBS Coastal Counts) and Steve Holliday (WeBS Inland Counts).

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## RECORD SUBMISSION

Please email records for the month to [ntbc.records@googlemail.com](mailto:ntbc.records@googlemail.com)

Please email for a copy of the standard spreadsheet and other details.

Location names and grid references: Please use of standard location names and include grid references as this greatly increases the value of records in subsequent analyses. A 1km square grid reference is the ideal e.g. NY8067 for Grindon Lough, but 2km square references (tetrads) are also acceptable e.g. NY86D in this case. A list of localities and their tetrad grid references (tetrad/Locality List) can be downloaded from the 'Resources & Downloads' section of the Club website at <http://www.ntbc.org.uk> – the use of these names, wherever possible, would be highly appreciated.

Could club members ensure they to submit records direct to NTBC rather than just Birdtrack. There may be an assumption by some members this happens automatically. We do not want to miss records.

## PHOTOGRAPHS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Please keep submitting your articles, photographs, sketches and illustrations for the bulletin. Thanks again to those who have supplied the excellent photographs. Please send to Steve Barrett at [NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com](mailto:NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com)

It is preferable if you re-size your photos before sending and a suggested size is 640 x 480 pixels. Please ensure you include the following information in the photograph title: name, species, date taken, locality.

Photographs will not be used elsewhere without the photographer's permission.

## MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Annual membership costs £10 for a junior, £30 for an individual, and £32 for a family.

For membership enquiries please contact 07713554242 [ntbc@jobentley.plus.com](mailto:ntbc@jobentley.plus.com)

Membership subscriptions were due at the beginning of October. If you internet bank you can pay online: please include your name in the ref. It is helpful if you email me to let me know when you've made the transfer [ntbc@jobentley.plus.com](mailto:ntbc@jobentley.plus.com)

NTBC will be distributing BIN 2015 at the January meeting so you need your subs to be up to date to receive your copy

If you decide to set up a standing order please date the first payment at least a fortnight from your posting date to allow time to process with the bank. You can also set up your standing order directly with your bank if you wish; just let me know.

## GIFT AID

NTBC is trying to update members' Gift Aid status.

If you pay by standing order you probably haven't signed a Gift Aid declaration for several years. It would be helpful if you could complete the first two parts of the membership form and send it back to me so that I can keep our information up to date for HMRC.

Your donation makes a big difference to our income for general running costs and is much appreciated.

You can download a form from the website contact me if you would like a paper copy sent out with your new BIN in January.

Finally, if you know anyone who might like to join NTBC please pass on the club information - new members are always welcome.

**Jo Bentley - Hon Treasurer**

## NTBC WEB SITE

The Club website is an excellent resource for all interested in birds in the north-east. There are numerous interesting sections, including a photograph gallery, site information and trip reports together with extensive reference information for birding in our area. Please submit any new content for the website to the main club email address.

## NTBC SIGHTINGS PAGE

The Sightings Page contains current reports by members. Access is from the NTBC website and an email notification is available for new postings. Members need to submit a request to be added to the website, specifying the email address they wish to post from before they can submit sightings to [ntbcorg@gmail.com](mailto:ntbcorg@gmail.com)





The Boulmer Baird's Sandpiper  
1st October  
by Jack Bucknall



The King Eider immature drake flies north  
Emmanuel Head, Holy Island  
23rd October at 11.10h  
Mike Carr



## COASTAL WeBS COUNTS: NORTHUMBERLAND

			TB	T. Brewis	KB	K. Redgrave/K. Bradshaw				TW	T. Watson				KVB	K. Brooks			PF	P. Fletch		
SEPTEMBER	2016		AC	A. Craggs	JAR	J. Roper/W. Banks				MSK	M. S. Kitcing/S. L. Barratt				LJM	L. J. McDougall			SP	S. Parnal		
			MHu	M. Hutcheson	MLC	M. L. Cadwallender/W. Dickson				AB	A. Brunt				MGA	M. G. Anderson			MK	M. Kerby		
Site	TOTAL	Berwick North Shore (including Little Beach)	Tweed Estuary	Spiral to Cocklaw Burn	Tweed: A1 By Pass to Gainslaw House	Whiteadder Water	Lindisfarne NWR (including Budle Bay)	Seahouses - Beadnell	Beadnell - Howick	Howick - Boulmer	Boulmer - Alnmouth	Aln Estuary	Amble - Chevington	Chevington - Cresswell	Cresswell - Newbiggin	Blyth Estuary	Blyth Estuary - Seaton Sluice	St Mary's Island	Whitley Bay - Tynemouth	Redwough - Scotswood Bridge, (north bank)	Scotswood - Newburn Bridge, (north bank)	
Counter		MHu	MHu	MHu	TB	TB	AC	AC	MLC	KB	JAR	AB	TAC	TW	MSK	MGA	LJM	KVB	SP	MK	PF	PF
Date		16	15	12	27	27	18	18	25	15	15/26	13	16	24	25	17	15	12	15	11	18	18
Red-throated Diver	21										12		3		4				2			
Great Northern Diver	2										2											
Black-throated Diver	1														1							
Little Grebe	15			2									13									
Slavonian Grebe	2											2										
Cormorant	314	18	37	13		2	18		35	4	2	9	2	9	11		107	10	22	15		
Shag	44	28		4			5			1	3				1				1	1		
Little Egret	19		1			2	12						4									
Grey Heron	77	2	24	1	5	2	3	1	7	1	8	3	6	1			8		2		3	1
Mute Swan	219		128		33	19	21	17					4				10					4
Whooper Swan	1				1																	
Pink-footed Goose	92												92									
Greylag Goose	466		157				305	270					3					1				
Canada Goose	533		84		57						30		362									
Dark-bellied Brent Goose	32						32															
Light-bellied Brent Goose	1,637						1632					5										
Shelduck	1,049						1042	80		1			4				2					
Wigeon	11,194		28	7	1	2	11131	1100	8		1		16									
Teal	684	12	62	2	23	21	211				20	70	235			1			1		12	14
Mallard	415		19	10	20	16	224	210			2		86						3		13	22
Pintail	5						5															
Shoveler	2						2															
Tufted Duck	11			6	1		4															
Scaup	2						2															
Eider	603	7	7	25			329		92	7	24	27	4	12	22		14	23	4	6		
Common Scoter	173			14			158												1			
Red-breasted Merganser	31						20			9	1	1										
Goosander	77	5	39		4	17			2		1		1				8					
Moorhen	27			1		10							12						4			
Coot	9			1			2						3						3			
Oystercatcher	3,396	72	56	82			2167	200	180	41	203	56	92	75	40	157	39	21	42	73		
Avocet	4												4									
Ringed Plover	642	40	28	84			166		91	123	17	9	6	27		14	24		10	2	1	
Golden Plover	2,313						338		216	207	1200				57	123			51	121		
Grey Plover	531						509		4	2	6	7		1					2			
Lapwing	1,268		216	114		37	304				148		182						15		232	20
Knot	1,170						1060				6				27	63	2	11	1			
Sanderling	491						57			27	42	18	17	87	37	76			130			
Curlew Sandpiper	1						1															
Purple Sandpiper	3																			3		
Dunlin	1,756	30	28	40			971	40	17	56	215	92	6	50	2	201	43		5			
Ruff	4	1	3																			
Snipe	75						10				1		63				1					
Black-tailed Godwit	18						2					11	5									
Bar-tailed Godwit	1,226	10	3				1191	15	4		4			4		10						
Whimbrel	1												1									
Curlew	1,938	46	30	16	2		1273	170	15	3	177	39	269		36	14			12	2	3	1
Redshank	2,372	26	210	4	14	5	1208	165	74	38	76	20	137	41	34	163	87	37	32	47	113	6
Greenshank	10				2		1						7									
Common Sandpiper	2				1								1									
Turnstone	735	68		5			47		90	37	119	3	2	59	5	99		6	155	40		
Black-headed Gull	2,764	108	124	358	482	15	303	110	103	206	149		169	65			424			78	139	41
Common Gull	828		6	310	250	20	188	100			4		45	3			1			1		
Lesser Black-backed Gull	39		4				1			16							8				10	
Herring Gull	2,434	52	458	56	10	20	807	250	70	116	201		39	36			235			228	104	2
Great Black-backed Gull	278	7	10	3	1		40	25	28	13	33		3	78			19			37	5	1
Kittiwake	16		16																			
Mediterranean Gull	26												1	1		24						
Sandwich Tern	104	2	58	4			2				15			8		1	2	6		6		
Common Tern	14																3			11		
Arctic Tern	12		4	8																		
ADDITIONAL SPECIES																						
Fulmar	12	1									11											
Black Swan	1						1	1														
Guillemot	2								1								1					
Kittiwake	1																1					
Gannet	66						14		46		1			5								
TOTALS - WILDFOWL	17,757	72	586	86	145	91	15,158	1,678	144	23	106	117	850	22	39	1	149	33	43	23	28	41
- WADERS	17,956	293	574	345	19	42	9,305	590	691	534	2,214	255	792	344	238	920	196	75	455	288	349	27
- GULLS & TERNS	6,515	169	680	739	743	55	1,341	485	201	351	402	0	257	191	0	25	692	6	0	361	258	44

MLC	M. L. Cadwallender/W. Dickson	MGA	M. G. Anderson	LJM	L. J. McDougall						
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# Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

<http://www.ntbc.org.uk/>

Bulletin 2016 No 10

MONTHLY SUMMARY OCTOBER 2016

5th December 2016



## SUPPLEMENTARY OCTOBER 2016 PHOTOGRAPHS



possible Arctic Warbler  
Prior's Park  
Colin Bradshaw



Bittern At St Mary's by Tim Dean 18th Oct





Black Cap at Holy Island  
by Mike Carr on 15th October



Brambling At Holy Island  
on 15th October by Mike Carr





Caspian Gull at St Mary's  
on 12th October by Jack Bucknall



Grey Plover and Dunlin  
at Boulmer  
by Tim Dean on 17th October





Great White Egret  
at Druridge Pools  
by Chris Barlow on 23rd October



Pinkfoot at Druridge Pools  
by Tim Dean on 20th October





Knot and Dunlin at Boulmer

by Tim Dean on 17th October



Lapwing at Holy Island  
by Mike Carr

on 10th October





Scaup at Druridge Pools by Tim Dean on 30th October



Redstart at Holy Island by Tim Dean on 16th October





Stonechat by Alan Jack



Woodcock at Holy Island

by Mike Carr

on 15th October





Turnstones at Boulmer  
by Janet Dean  
on 7th October



Todd's Canada Goose at Goswick  
by Tim Dean on 28th October

# Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

<http://www.ntbc.org.uk/>

**Bulletin 2016 No 11 MONTHLY SUMMARY**

**NOVEMBER 2016**

**3rd January 2017**



## CONTENTS

WeBS Inland

## HIGHLIGHTS

Bewick's Swan	Adult at Backworth on 26th.
American Wigeon	Male at Grindon Lough from 10th to 25th.
Garganey	Latest county record with an eclipse male at Big Waters from 13th - 15th.
Smew	Redhead at Bolam Lake from 8th onwards.
Red-necked Grebe	Only singles at Seaton Sluice and Holy Island.
Glaucous Gull	Lingering first-winter in Tynemouth area from 2nd.
Great Grey Shrike	One present all month at Prestwick Carr and a single in Harwood Forest on 12th.
Shore Lark	Group of seven at east Chevington from 23rd. Largest group in county since 2003.
Siberian Chiffchaff	One at East Chevington on 23rd.
Waxwing	Influx with several groups of 100 – 120.
Richard's Pipit	One over East Chevington on 13th.
Water Pipit	Two at Druridge Pools / East Chevington and a single at Boulmer.
Lapland Bunting	Single at Ross on 13th and interestingly inland at Plenmeller Common on 24th.

## INDOOR MEETINGS

NTBC indoor meetings are held at Northern Rugby Club, McCracken Park, Great North Road, Newcastle, NE3 2DT starting at 7.00pm and generally finish between 9.00pm-9.30pm.

## Birds and Conservation on Flamborough Headland by Richard Baines

**12th January 2017**

A exciting talk on the birds and the work at this great white headland on the east coast of Yorkshire.

## FIELD TRIPS

NTBC field trips allow club members, especially new, to visit sites they do not know, and learn from more established and experienced club members. If any one has any site they would like to visit, please let me know and I will add it to the programme. In 2017 visits will be to:-

Langholm in April

Geltsdale and Kielder in May

June/July will be a 'nightjars trip'

Musselburgh in October.

Others will be added later with further details to follow.

Please contact Steve Anderson for details  
[seaswan@btinternet.com](mailto:seaswan@btinternet.com)

A good winter for Waxwings

This bird was in a Blyth flock

Colin Bradshaw





**CLASSIFIED LIST****Mute Swan** *Cygnus olor*

57 were at QEII CP Lake on 3rd (DM/STH), 24 at Killingworth Lake on 14th (DM), and 19-20 at Amble (JMA) and East Chevington (DM/STH). Five to six were also at Blagdon, Fenham Flats, Ladyburn Lake, and Newcastle Exhibition and Leazes Parks, and one to four at five further sites.

**Whooper Swan** *Cygnus cygnus*

Poor numbers included peaks of only 16 (three juveniles) at Widdrington Moor Lake on 1st (DM/STH), 11 at the Coquet Estuary on 3rd (JMA) and 11 at Fenham Flats on 4th (DM/STH), and five to nine at Big Waters, Broomlee Lough, Caistron, Cresswell Pond, Derwent Reservoir, Doddington, East Chevington, Grindon Lough, Newton Pool and Warkworth. One to four were also at Bothal Pond, Budle Bay, Haughton Strother GP and West Ord. Southerly movement involved six to nine at Boulmer Point (JR) and Ellington (TB) on 1st, five to seven at Newbiggin (DM/PRM) and Seaton Sluice (SSWT) on 3rd, and six at North Shields Fish Quay on 26th (SPP). Three to five flew N over Druridge Pools and Ellington, three W at Prestwick Carr and two flew inland at Newbiggin Beacon Point.

**Pink-footed Goose** *Anser brachyrhynchus*

Large concentrations involved about 2,000 at East Chevington on 30th (TRD/JD), 1,000 at Cresswell Pond on 20th (TB), 550 at Cheswick on 24th (MHu), and 400-500 at Druridge (TRD) and Holy Island (ADM). Most other records involved birds on the move. North-bound reports included 560 at East Ord on 2nd and 500 there on 9th and 14th (MHu), and 100 over Tynemouth on 19th (CB). Southerly movement involved 500 at Seaton Sluice on 2nd (SSWT), 300-320 at Newton Point (TRD) and Snab Point (PRM) on 16th -17th, 100-150 at Alnmouth, Bedlington, Druridge, East Ord and Newbiggin on various dates between 1st-30th, while 330 flew SW at Linton Ponds on 13th (CDH), and 150 W at Alnmouth. Groups of 30-69 were at/over Cocklawburn, Cramlington, East Chevington, Goswick, Haughton Strother GP, Longhoughton Steel, with smaller numbers at several further sites.

**White-fronted Goose** *Anser flavirostris*

Birds of the Greenland *flavirostris* race included two at Grindon Lough on 19th (PRM) and a single adult at Woodhorn Flashes on 24th (STH).

**Greylag Goose** *Anser anser*

A group of 125 flew E at Cramlington on 15th (DM) and 60 moved SE at Barrasford on 23rd (MRS). Greatest concentrations this month were 415 at Big Waters on 12th (MM *per* GB), 300 at Derwent Reservoir on 5th (JMA), 300 at Low Newton scrape on 19th (TD), 283 at Haughton Strother GP on 18th (MR), 200 at East Chevington and Whittle Dene Reservoirs (MSH), 105-157 at Backworth and Woodhorn (MSH), and 54-78 at Grindon Lough and Linton Ponds. One to three were at nine further sites.

**Canada Goose** *Branta canadensis*

Variable numbers at Grindon Lough included a peak of 427 on 23rd (SJH) and 150-403 throughout the month (SJH/PRM/MRS). Peak counts elsewhere involved 300 at Alnmouth wetlands on 3rd (JMA), 220 at Airy Holm Reservoir on 3rd (a record for the site; IFo), 104-158 at Bothal Pond (TD), Derwent Reservoir (IFo) and QEII CP Lake (DM/STH), 60-75 at Killingworth and Widdrington Moor Lakes, and 16-40 at Amble Braid, Druridge Pools, Greenlee Lough, Newcastle Leazes Park, and the Tweed Estuary.

**Barnacle Goose** *Branta leucopsis*

Budle Bay held 610 on 19th (CGK), and 350 were at Fenham Flats on 13th (IBDa/KDa) when 300 were counted between Ross-Guile Point (MJC). A group of 12 flew in to Holywell Pond on 2nd (MP). One to two were also at Derwent Reservoir, Grindon Lough and QEII CP Lake.



A dozen Barnacle  
Geese

Holywell Pond

Mike Potts

12th November



**Brent Goose** *Branta bernicla*

Birds of the pale-bellied *hrota* race included 440 at Fenham Flats on 4th (DM/STH), 300 between Ross-Guile Point on 13th (MJC), 69 at Budle Bay on 23rd (MSH), and one to two N at Seaton Sluice and Tynemouth.

The only reports of dark-bellied *bernicla* race birds were singles at Cresswell Pond on 21st and 27th (IRD/MSH).

Un-raced birds included 1,430 at Fenham Flats on 13th (IBDa/KDa), 120 at Budle Bay on 19th (CGK), six N at Newbiggin on 2nd (ASH/JR), and one at Amble.

**Shelduck** *Tadorna tadorna*

Only two flew N at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT), 36 were at Budle Bay on 4th (DM), six at Howdon on 19th (CB), four at the Blyth Estuary on 25th (STH), and one to two at Cresswell Pond and Druridge Pools. An adult and juvenile were at Arcot Pond between 2nd-8th (STH/DM/LJM).

**Mandarin** *Aix galericulata*

Single drakes were at Howdon on 2nd (CB) and Holywell Pond on 12th (GPK).

**Wigeon** *Anas penelope*

An above-average 550 flew N at Seaton Sluice during the month, including 492 N between 3rd-8th (SSWT), 63 moved N at Newbiggin on 6th (STH), and 24-34 N at Cullercoats and Snab Point. Fenham Flats held 1,400 on 13th (IBDa/KDa), 1,100 were in Budle Bay on 19th (CGK), 800 at Cresswell Pond on 21st (MSH), 728 at Grindon Lough on 15th (SJH), 678 at Big Waters on 29th (AJJ per GB), and 514 at Derwent Reservoir (IFo). Counts of 200-260 came from Alnmouth, Bothal and Linton Ponds, Branton GP, Druridge Pools, Low Newton scrape and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, 150-165 were at the Coquet Estuary and Gosforth Park NR, and 50-69 at Hauxley NR and Warkworth. One to 14 were at seven further sites including, more unusually, one in Northumberland Park, North Shields.

A pair of Wigeon

QEII Lake

Tim Dean

13th November





**American Wigeon** *Anas americana*

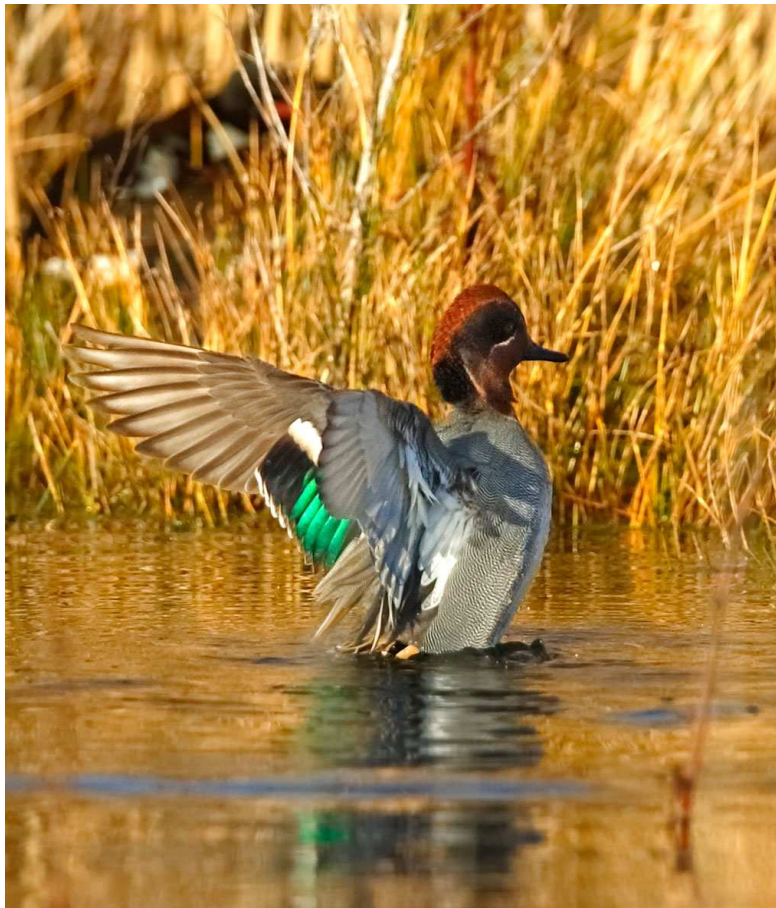
A drake at Grindon Lough on 10th (SJH) was reported regularly there until 24th (SJH/PRM).

**Gadwall** *Anas strepera*

Singles flew N at Seaton Sluice on 5th (SSWT) and Tynemouth on 6th (DRW). Peak counts were 54 at Big Waters on 20th (GB), 52 at Gosforth Park NR on 3rd (GPK), 51 at East Chevington on 17th (GPK), 41 at Swallow Pond on 15th (GPK), 26 at the Blyth Estuary, and ten to 14 at Bothal Pond, Branton GP, Druridge Pools, Hedgeley GP and St Mary's Wetland. Five to eight were found at Arcot Pond, Caistron, Howdon Wetland and Killingworth Lake, three to four at Cresswell Pond and Ladyburn Lake, and one at Hauxley Reserve.



Two drakes from Howdon Wetland by Colin Bradshaw. Top: a Gadwall and below: a teal





**Teal** *Anas crecca*

A total of 213 flew N and 58 S at Seaton Sluice, including 195 N and 46 S between 3rd-8th (SSWT), 26 flew S at Cocklawburn on 1st (MHu), and four to ten N at Cullercoats, Newbiggin and St Mary's. About 500 at Holy Island during the month were split between the Lough, the Rocket Field and flood pools at Chare Ends (IK), 410 were at Big Waters on 29th (AJJ per GB), 315-317 at Derwent Reservoir (IFo) and Grindon Lough (SJH), 280-299 at Druridge Pools and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, 187-217 at Grindon Lough and Howdon, and 106-118 at Bothal and Cresswell Ponds. Groups of 55-84 were at Arcot, Linton and Middle Ord Ponds, the Blyth Estuary and East Chevington, and 13-40 at Castle Island, Haughton Strother GP, Hauxley Reserve, Monks' House Pool, Plenmeller Common and St Mary's Wetland. At Callerton subsidence area, 30 were flushed by a Harris Hawk on 12th (MH). Display was noted at Big Waters on 19th (GB).

**Mallard** *Anas platyrhynchos*

A total of 89 N at Seaton Sluice during the month included 75 N between 2nd-8th (SSWT), and seven flew N at Cullercoats on 3rd (IJ). The largest congregations involved 228 at Derwent Reservoir on 29th (IFo), 170 at Grindon Lough on 13th (MRS), 134 at the Tweed Estuary on 14th (MHu), 134 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 26th (MSH), and 119 at Big Waters (GB). Groups of 52-90 were at Bothal and Cresswell Ponds, Druridge Pools, Haughton Strother GP and Morpeth, and 20-43 at Arcot and Middle Ord Ponds, the Blyth Estuary, Castle Island, Killingworth, Ladyburn and QEII CP Lakes, Newcastle Leazes Park and Rothbury.

**Pintail** *Anas acuta*

One flew N, with Eiders and three Red-breasted Mergansers, at St Mary's on 8th (SPP). East Chevington held eight on 13th (TF/JFa) and three to six regularly between 2nd-20th (TB/MSH/CW *et al.*), three were at Druridge Pools (TRD/JD), Grindon Lough (PRM) and Hallington Reservoir (SW), and one to two at Big Waters, Fenham Flats, Gosforth Park NR and Holywell Pond.

**Garganey** *Anas querquedula*

One, probably an eclipse drake, was at Big Waters on 13th and 15th (AJJ).

**Shoveler** *Anas clypeata*

Four flew N at Seaton Sluice between 2nd-6th (SSWT), and singles moved N at Newbiggin (STH), St Mary's (MSH) and Tynemouth (DRW) on 6th. Peak counts were 56 at Swallow Pond on 2nd (GPK), 38 at East Chevington on 1st (DM/STH), and 13-14 at Budle Bay (CGK) and Grindon Lough (PRM). Six to eight were at Big Waters (AJJ per GB), Druridge Pools (PRM) and Linton Ponds (CDH), and three to four at Arcot and Bothal Ponds, Branton GP and Killingworth Lake. Less usual was a drake at Derwent Reservoir on 5th (IFo).

**Pochard** *Aythya ferina*

Double-figure counts involved 12 at Widdrington Moor Lake on 12th and 17th (TB/PRM), and 11 at East Chevington on 13th (JL). Few were noted away from these two sites, with six at Broomlee Lough on 13th (MRS), and one to two at Big Waters, Bothal and Holywell Ponds, Druridge Pools, and Killingworth and QEII CP Lakes.

**Tufted Duck** *Aythya fuligula*

One flew N at Seaton Sluice on 3rd (SSWT). Largest counts came from East Chevington, with 91 on 17th (PRM), nearby Ladyburn Lake, with 66 on 8th (LJM), and QEII CP Lake, with 62 on 13th (CDH). Groups of 50-55 were at Branton GP (IBDa/KDa) and Castle Island (STH/DM), 20-38 at Bothal, Cocklawburn and Swallow Ponds, Killingworth Lake, Newcastle Exhibition Park and Widdrington Moor Lake, and 13-14 at Bolam Lake and Holywell Pond. Ten were offshore in Druridge Bay on 1st (DM/STH), and three to nine were at eight further mainland sites.

**Scaup** *Aythya marila*

Ten flew N at Seaton Sluice between 22nd-28th (SSWT). At East Chevington north pool nine were noted on 1st (DM/STH), 12 on 12th (TB), and notable 20 on 13th (TF/JFa), with two to five on several further dates between 2nd-23rd (TRD/MSH *et al.*). Three were at Spittal Bay on 6th (MHu) and three at Hauxley Reserve on 24th (NRG), two at Castle Island (GB) and Druridge Pools (TRD/JD), and singles at Cresswell Pond and Football Hole.

**Eider** *Somateria mollissima*

A below-average 204 flew N and 24 S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT), and 31-35 flew N and one to five S at Newbiggin (GB) and Tynemouth (DRW) on 27th. Peak counts were 103 at Fenham Flats on 4th (DM/STH), 94 at Cocklawburn on 24th (MHu), 60 at Blyth Harbour on 22nd (STH), 35-40 at Amble Harbour, Berwick North Shore and the Tweed Estuary, and 20 at North Shields Fish Quay. Six to nine were also at Newbiggin and Snab Point.

**Long-tailed Duck** *Clangula hyemalis*

Good numbers were recorded at Seaton Sluice with a monthly total of 58 N, including 13 N on 28th (SSWT). On 6th, 17 flew N and one S at Tynemouth (DRW), and three to eight N at Cullercoats (IJ), Newbiggin (STH) and St Mary's (MSH); and on 27th, seven flew N and five S at Newbiggin (GB), and seven N at Tynemouth (DRW). A further six flew N at Tynemouth on three further dates (DRW). Peak counts were 25 between Ross-Guile Point on 13th (MJC), 22 at Budle Point on 19th (CGK), 21 (many displaying) at St Cuthbert's Island (Holy Island) on 26th (IK), and 15 off Goswick on 1st (MH/AA). Five to six were at Fenham Flats (DM/STH) and Howick (MJC), and three to four off Brier Dene, East Chevington (pools and sea), Football Hole and Newbiggin Bay. One to two were at Cresswell Pond, Snab Point and Stag Rocks. Singles visited Bothal Pond on 19th-20th and 27th (IRD/TD/TF/JFa), Castle Island on 27th (GB) and QEII CP Lake on 3rd (DM/STH). Further inland, two were at Branton GP on 9th and one there on 8th and 20th (IBDa/KDa/NNBC), and a female/immature drake was at Derwent Reservoir on 6th (IFo).

**Common Scoter** *Melanitta nigra*

A total of 1,604 flew N and 212 S at Seaton Sluice during the month, including 488 N on 28th (SSWT), and on 27th, 125 moved N and 67 S at Newbiggin (GB) and 94 N and 36 S at Tynemouth (DRW), while 107 flew N and 50 S at the latter site on 6th (DRW). Smaller numbers flew N at Berwick, Cullercoats and St Mary's on several dates. A group of 300 was off Chevington Burn on 20th (TD), a total of about 300 were off Goswick on 1st (MH/AA), and 120 at Cheswick on 4th (TRD/JD). Counts of 12-32 came from Cocklawburn, Holy Island and North Blyth, and nine were at Football Hole. A pair was on Cresswell Pond on 18th (TRD) and a female was inland at Hallington Reservoir on 27th (SW).

**Velvet Scoter** *Melanitta fusca*

Monthly totals involved 16 that flew N and one S at Seaton Sluice (SSWT) and four N and one S at Newbiggin (GB/ASH/JR/STH), while singles flew N at Cullercoats (IJ), St Mary's (CGK/AJ) and Tynemouth (DRW) on two dates. Five were close inshore at Football Hole on 19th (TD), two were off Goswick on 1st (AA/MH), and one to two on the sea off Seaton Sluice on three dates between 11th-26th (SSWT).

**Goldeneye** *Bucephala clangula*

The monthly total at Seaton Sluice was a below-average 226 N and 20 S, including 180 N between 2nd-8th (SSWT), a total of 44 flew N and seven S at Tynemouth on 2nd and 6th (DRW), and two to nine flew N at Cullercoats, Newbiggin and St Mary's. East Chevington held an impressive 108 on 14th (TRD) and 20-85 regularly all month (JL/PRM *et al.*), 58 were at Castle Island on 27th (GB), 20-21 at Bolam Lake (TRD/JD) and Branton GP (IBDa/KDa), and 11-18 at Derwent Reservoir, Grindon Lough, the Tweed Estuary and West Ord. Five to nine were also at Big Waters, Bothal Pond, Branton GP, Castron, Cresswell Pond, Football Hole, Hauxley Reserve, Howick, QEII CP Lake, and one to four at nine further scattered sites.

**Smew** *Mergellus albellus*

A 'redhead' found at Bolam Lake CP on 8th (MSH) remained until at least 23rd (IRD/TRD/JD/CW).

**Red-breasted Merganser** *Mergus serrator*

Eight flew N and one S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT), and singles N at Newbiggin and Snab Point. A total of 25 were counted between Ross-Guile Point on 13th (MJC), seven to eight were at the Blyth and Wansbeck Estuaries (GB/LJM), five to six at East Chevington (TRD), Holy Island (ADM), Newbiggin (STH), three to four at Cheswick, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools and Stag Rocks, and one to two at the Blyth Estuary, Castle Island and Fenham Flats.

**Goosander** *Mergus merganser*

Three flew N and one S at Seaton Sluice between 7th-28th (SSWT). Peak counts were 17 at Branton GP on 7th (TRD/JD), 14 at Broomlee Lough on 13th (MRS), eight at Hagg Bank (River Tyne) on 25th (AJN), and five to six at Bolam Lake (TRD/JD/MSH) and New Water Haugh (MHu). Three to four were reported from Big Waters, Holywell and Swallow Ponds, Newcastle Leazes Park and the Tweed Estuary, and one to two at/over Budle Bay, Bywell, Castron, Doddington, Felton, Guyzance, Killingworth and QEII CP Lakes, and Jesmond Dene.

**Red-legged Partridge** *Alectoris rufa*

35 at Earle were followed by 24 in the Harthope Valley on 4th (DM). One to ten were at Abberwick Farm (Alnwick), Alnwick Moor, Big Waters, Haughton Strother GP, Horsden and Middleton Hall.

**Red Grouse** *Lagopus lagopus*

A minimum of 12 were at Plenmeller Common on 24th (PRM), whilst ten were at Langleeford on 4th (DM). Three were at Coanwood Common on 1st (SJH) and a pair were at Bewick Moor on 25th (MH).

**Black Grouse** *Tetrao tetrix*

Two greyhens were at Plenmeller Common on 24th, following a sighting of a male there on 18th (PRM). A single male was feeding on Hawthorn at Coanwood Lodge on 15th (SJH).

**Grey Partridge** *Perdix perdix*

11 were at Swallow Pond on 20th and one to nine were at five other locations.

**Pheasant** *Phasianus colchicus*

Six were at Bothal Sawmill on 1st (TB).

**Red-throated Diver** *Gavia stellata*

The total for the month at Seaton Sluice was about average, with 121 N and 90 S (SSWT). Other notable passage counts were 26 N past Newbiggin in 90 minutes on 21st (CB/JGS) and a total of 17 past there between 0825-1100h on 27th (GB). At Druridge Links a total of 29 were counted on a smooth sea on 18th and 15 were off Goswick on 1st, one of which was still in summer plumage (MH/AA). One to eight were recorded from many locations throughout the whole of the coastal area.

**Black-throated Diver** *Gavia arctica*

A very good month for this species with seven N recorded past Seaton Sluice during the month, most still moulting out of summer plumage (SSWT) and singles reported from five other localities.

**Great Northern Diver** *Gavia immer*

November as usual proved to be an excellent month for this species with a monthly total of ten N and one S past Seaton Sluice (SSWT), six N past Snab Point (Cresswell) on 7th (MH/ADM) and one to three seen at many other coastal locations. One, a first-winter bird, was well inland at Haughton Strother GP (Humshaugh) on 23rd (MR).

**Fulmar** *Fulmarus glacialis*

The only record was of 33 N past Snab Point (Cresswell) in one hour on 22nd (MH/AA).

**Sooty Shearwater** *Puffinus griseus*

On a traditionally poor month for this species, unexpected passage numbers were reported during the morning of 6th. At Seaton Sluice, the previous daily November record of two was smashed with a total of 22 N in five hours (SSWT) and even that figure was surpassed at Newbiggin with a total of 31 N (STH *et al.*) during that morning. A single was also sighted N past Snab Point on 22nd (AA/MH).

**Manx Shearwater** *Puffinus puffinus*

The monthly total at Seaton Sluice was three – two N on 6th and a single N on 22nd (SSWT).

**Gannet** *Morus bassanus*

The monthly total at Seaton Sluice was 1,166 N and 79 S in 55 hours of watching, including a maximum day count of 310 N on 6th. 360 N per hour were recorded at Berwick Pier on 6th (MHu) with 40+ past St Mary's on the same day (MSH). Passage gradually declined towards the end of the month.

**Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo*

The largest count was a peak of 39 at Blyth Harbour on 22nd (STH), 34 were roosting at Sandstell Point (Spittal) during high tide on 6th and WeBS counts produced 27 at Berwick North Shore on 15th and 16 in the River Tweed Estuary on 14th (MHu). One to 15 were at many other usual locations including an adult of the continental *sinensis* race at Cresswell Pond NWT on 17th (PRM).

**Shag** *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

Seaton Sluice Watch Tower recorded a peak of 24 S in one hour on 24th, the only day that movement of any note was recorded along the east coast (SSWT). Included in that movement was one leucistic bird past Beacon Point (Newbiggin) which was also recorded at Whitburn (STH). 25 were at Berwick Little Beach on 4th (TRD/JD) and 16 were present during a WeBS count at Berwick North Shore on 15th (MHu).

**Bittern** *Botaurus stellaris*

At least two were present at Gosforth Park throughout (GPK/MN/MH/AJH/SPP), a single was at East Chevington North Pool on two dates (DM/TB) and one crept along the reed edge close to the hide at Cresswell Pond on 1st (DM).

**Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta*

Widely reported from 12 locations including peaks of five around the Boghouses (Cramlington) area, Cresswell Pond NR and Fenham Flats.

**Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea*

22 were present during a WeBS count at the River Tweed Estuary on 14th (MHu) and Howdon Wetland peaked at 21 on 2nd (CB). Eight were on staithes at North Blyth on 8th (STH) and one to three were at many other localities.

**Little Grebe** *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

East Chevington proved a popular location with numbers building to a peak of 22 on 17th (PRM). Castle Island (River Wansbeck) held 14 on 13th (STH/DM), nine were at Cresswell Pond NWT and many other locations recorded one to six birds including a rare visitor to Exhibition Park (Newcastle), which only stayed for one day on 2nd (GB) and one, unusually – only recorded once previously in 1999 - on the sea at Holy Island North Shore on 13th (IK).

**Great Crested Grebe** *Podiceps cristatus*

Three present at Big Waters NWT on 1st gradually reduced to none after 19th (GB), two were on the sea off the burn mouth at East Chevington on 26th (TF/JFa) and singles were at five other locations.

**Red-Necked Grebe** *Podiceps grisegena*

A single flying N past Seaton Sluice on 5th was the only record so far this year at that location (SSWT), and the only other sighting was one at Sandham Bay (Holy Island) on 25th (IK).

**Slavonian Grebe** *Podiceps auritus*

Four were at Budle Point on 19th (CGK) with the same number feeding in a tight party close inshore at St Cuthbert's Island (Holy Island) on 26th (IK). Three were between Ross-Guille Point on 13th, two were at Saltpan Rocks (Cocklawburn) on 4th and singles were on the River Coquet (Warkworth), Seaton Sluice and Spittal.

**Red Kite** *Milvus Milvus*

The only one record this month involved a bird at Low Wakerley on 4th (IFo).

**Marsh Harrier** *Circus aeruginosus*

An adult female was at East Chevington on 28th (SPP) and another bird that was possibly a 1st calendar year bird was at the same site on 29th (MH).



**Hen Harrier** *Circus cyaneus*

A juvenile was at Druridge Pools on 3rd (TRD/JD) with the same bird being seen in the area until December (TB *et al.*). Another bird was also seen at Widdrington Moor Lake on several dates (MH *et al.*). Adult males were seen at three other sites in the County on 9th, 18th and 25th (MH/CW/MH) and an un-aged bird was at another confidential site on 14th (SJH).

**Goshawk** *Accipiter gentilis*

A single bird was seen near Ryal on 10th (ALT).

**Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter nisus*

Two birds were seen at Ashington on 9th (TB) and two were at Holy Island including a female being attacked by a Peregrine *Falco peregrinus* on 20th (ADM). Single birds were noted at 18 sites including a large juvenile feeding on a Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus* at Cramlington on 12th (LJM).

A Sparrowhawk in a Woolsington garden  
by John Littleton

**Common Buzzard** *Buteo buteo*

Four birds were at West Chevington on 14th (AJH) and at four were also at Prestwick Carr on 26th (MSH), three birds were noted at Harthope Valley on 4th (DM/STH), Widdrington Moor Lake on 12th & 19th (TB) and at Shiellow Woods on 16th (MJC). One or two birds were recorded at 20 sites.

**Water Rail** *Rallus aquaticus*

Four were at Big Waters NWT on 1st (ISD *per* GB) and three were at East Chevington on 13th (IRD). Two birds were at Backworth, Rocket Field Pools (Holy Island) and at Swallow Pond (Wallsend) throughout the month (CGk/GPK/IK *et al.*). Two birds were also at East Chevington & Cresswell Pond on several dates and at Prestwick Carr on 12th (PCF). Single birds were at Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Holywell Pond, Lambley mine water treatment station and at Linton Pond.

**Moorhen** *Gallinula chloropus*

36 birds were at Castle Island on 13th (STH/DM), 13 were on the Coquet Estuary at Amble Braid on 4th (MH), 12 were observed at QEII CP on 13th (CDH) and 11 were at Alnmouth GC on 11th (STH). One to nine birds were at Alnwick Garden, Arcot Pond, Druridge Bay CP, Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Hauxley NWT, Jesmond Dene (Newcastle), Killingworth Lake, Leazes Park (Newcastle) and at QEII CP.

**Coot** *Fulica atra*

East Chevington had the highest counts peaking at 200 on 13th (JL *et al.*) and 103 birds were at Swallow Pond (Wallsend). Other high counts involved 52 at Big Waters NWT on 20th (GB), 24 at Killingworth Lake on 14th (DM), 20 at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 10th (DM) and 19 at Widdrington Moor Lake on 19th (PRM). One to 18 birds were at Arcot Pond, Bothal Pond, Cresswell Pond, Exhibition Park (Newcastle) and Leazes Park (Newcastle).

**Avocet** *Recurvirostra avosetta*

An individual lingered on until 18th at Cresswell Pond NWT. No records were submitted after this date .

**Oystercatcher** *Haematopus ostralegus*

By far the largest count was of 136 birds counted at Berwick North Shore during a WeBS count on 15th (MHu). Other submitted records were from North Blyth staithes (81 on 28th, STH), Amble Links (40 on 12th, JMA), Tweed Estuary (36 on 14th, MHu), Cresswell, Snab Point (ca. 25 on 17th, PRM) and at Hauxley NWT (23 on 24th, NRG).

**Golden Plover** *Pluvialis apricaria*

An exceptionally large flock for Druridge fields was seen on 28th, when 2,000 birds were counted (TRD). This number had shrunk to 800 by 23rd (JD/TRD), with a smaller count of ca. 500 at Hemscott Hill also on 23rd (TB). Building up to the large count of 28th, 450 birds were observed at Druridge Lane on 12th, TB), increasing to 525 on 16th at Druridge hamlet (IRD), which increased further to 529 by the next day at Cresswell Pond NWT (PRM). Earlier in the month, on 3rd, 600 birds were reported at Blyth links (TB). Other large coastal counts came from East Chevington, where 360-400 birds were seen between 17th-23rd (PRM and TB), Low Newton hosted 300 on 19th (TD), while 200 were at Warkworth-Amble on 3rd (JMA), Cocklawburn on 6th had 106 birds (MHu) and 100 were seen at Monks' House on 3rd (JMA). Large counts from inland locations came from Grindon Lough, where 438 on 11th (SJH), increased to 512 on 18th, then decreased to 210 on 19th (PRM), Longhorsley, Smallburn, where ca. 500 were reported on 24th, which reduced to 25 by 28th (AB/LB) and Rochester on 12th, when 200 were observed (JR). All other reports were of 80 or fewer birds and came from Newcastle (Jesmond), Pegswood, Plenmeller Common, Prestwick Carr and Snook Pt.-Football Hole-Newton Pt.

**Grey Plover** *Pluvialis squatarola*

Fifty birds were counted between Ross-Guile Point on 3rd (MJC), with a much smaller minimum of ten birds reported from nearby Budle Bay on 23rd (MSH). At Berwick North Shore nine were reported on 15th (MHu) and eight were seen at Newbiggin, Beacon Point on 12th (GB). Other counts of four or fewer birds were from Cocklawburn, Cresswell, Blyth Estuary, Tweed Estuary, Snook Pt.-Football Hole-Newton Point and Warkworth Gut.

**Lapwing** *Vanellus vanellus*

The largest count for the month came from Druridge fields with 700-750 seen in flight on 19th (ASJ), an increase from the 395 birds seen there on 16th (IRD). Despite some cold weather, numbers of Lapwing inland were still significant, 312 birds were counted at Grindon Lough on 2nd (PRM), increasing to 595 on 11th (SJH), which then decreased to 480 by 18th and down to ca. 260 on 19th (PRM). Elsewhere a minimum count of 310 birds was made at East Chevington on 17th (PRM), 300 were at Derwent Reservoir on 30th (IFo), 274 were in the fields next to Widdrington Moor Lake on 15th (STH), Humshaugh, Haughton Strother GP held 250 on 10th (MR) and 240 were at Hedgeley Lakes on 13th (IBDa/KDa). Reports from elsewhere of 100-200 birds came from Alnmouth, Amble caravan park, Big Waters NWT, Blyth near Gloucester Lodge, Bothal Pond, Cocklawburn, Cresswell Pond NWT, Druridge Lane-Pools, Monks' House, R. Tweed at New Water Haugh and Rochester. Counts of less than 100 and from locations different from the above came from Amble weir, Catton, Cramlington, East Chevington, Holy Island, Howdon, Plenmeller Common, Prestwick Carr, off Seaton Sluice and Tughall.

**Ringed Plover** *Charadrius hiaticula*

A minimum of 45 birds were seen at Cresswell Snab Point on 17th (PRM) with 40 at Berwick, Little Beach on 4th (TRD/JD). Twenty birds were counted at Cresswell on 3rd (TRD/JD) and a further 20 at East Chevington on 23rd (TRD/JD). The only other reports came from Newbiggin and were of two and four birds on 18th and 3rd (TRD, PRM, respectively).

**Curlew** *Numenius arquata*

The Tweed Estuary held 87 birds on 14th. Possibly some of these birds were counted the next day (15th), when a count of 76 was made on Berwick North Shore (MHu). On the same day, 72 were counted just to the south, at Cocklawburn (MHu). Howdon on 17th had 66 birds (CB), with the same number in the Blyth Estuary on 25th (STH). Sixty birds were present throughout the month at Tynemouth, Marden Farm (MN) and a minimum of 50 were seen flying SW over Monkseaton on 14th (MSH). Druridge Pools reported 47 birds on 20th (IRD), 40+ were in a flooded field nr Annstead Farm (Seahouses) on 23rd (MSH), 32 at Cresswell Snab Point on 17th with 13 at nearby Druridge Pools on the same day (PRM). Other reports of 27 birds or less were from Big Waters NWT, Castle Island (R. Wansbeck), Druridge Pools, Cresswell Pond, East Chevington, Grindon Lough, Hauxley NWT, Newbiggin and Woodhorn.

**Black-tailed Godwit** *Limosa limosa*

Numbers were surprisingly buoyant from Holy Island down to Howdon with the biggest report of 61 coming from Warkworth Gut on 10th (IRD). Before then the most notable count was of 28 at Amble Braid on 4th (MH) and after the peak count of the 10th the notable records came from Holy Island (11 on 11th, ADM), East Chevington (18 on 13th, followed by 16 on 13th, IRD, TF/JFa, respectively), Howdon (18, also on 13th, followed by 22 on 15th, CB). Howdon recorded its peak count on 17th when 22 birds were counted (CB). Thereafter records became fewer with the only notable count of 9 on 25th at Holy Island, Rocket Field pools.



Black-tailed Godwits take flight at Howdon Wetland by Colin Bradshaw



**Bar-tailed Godwit** *Limosa lapponica*

The apparent trend of fewer wintering birds continued this November with only two double-figure counts, one of 16 from Berwick Pier reported on 5th (MHu) and the other of 13 birds in the Coquet Estuary on 3rd (JMA). A count of nine birds on 15th at Berwick North Shore possibly involved some of the birds recorded at Berwick Pier on 5th (MHu). Other counts of three or fewer came from Hauxley NWT and Newbiggin.

**Turnstone** *Arenaria interpres*

An impressive 142 were seen on a WeBS count at Berwick North Shore on 15th (MHu). A further 32 were seen at the River Tweed Estuary during a WeBS count the day before. 20-30 were at Cocklawburn, Cresswell, Football Hole (Newton) and Hauxley from 3rd-17th. A single was at Cresswell Pond on 30th (TRD/JD).



A Turnstone eyes up a crab snack at Boulmer  
Chris Barlow 13th November

**Knot** *Calidris canutus*

The high numbers seen at Lindisfarne reduced this month as the maximum counts were at least 300 at Budle Bay on 23rd (MSH) and 80 from Ross-Guile Point on 13th (MJC). On 10th, 55 were at Amble Weir (IRD) and 34 at Cocklawburn (MHu). At Tynemouth, 14 were seen on 11th (DRW). Elsewhere one to two were at Berwick North Shore and Newbiggin.

**Sanderling** *Calidris alba*

Football Hole (Newton) attracted 110 on 16th (TRD) and 100 were at East Chevington on 24th (MN). The maximum count from St Mary's was 75 on 18th compared to a peak of 170 in October (SPP). Groups of 60 seen from Ross-Guile Point on 13th (MJC) and Budle Bay on 23rd (MSH) may have been the same group of birds. 40 were at Amble on 12th (JMA). Five at Newbiggin on 18th increased to 26 by 24th (TRD/STH). 15-18 were at Druridge, Howick and Sandham Bay (Holy Island). One to eight were seen at Berwick Little Beach and North Shore, Cocklawburn, Cresswell and Stag Rocks.

**Dunlin** *Calidris alpina*

At Seaton Sluice 60 flew N on 7th (SSWT). Budle Bay continued to attract the highest numbers with 500+ again counted this month on 25th (MSH). Other three-figure counts were 278 on the River Blyth Estuary on 25th (STH), 158 at Warkworth Gut on 12th (IRB) and 150 at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 12th (GB). A WeBS count revealed 64 at the River Tweed Estuary on 14th (MHu). Cresswell Pond held birds all month with a maximum of 40 on 30th (TRD/JD *et al.*) and ca.60 were at Snab Point (Cresswell) on 17th (PRM). 20-30 were in the Newton area from 16th-19th and at least 15 were attracted to floodwater at Annstead Farm (Seahouses). One to ten were seen at Berwick Little Beach and North Shore, Bothal Pond, Calot Shad (River Tweed), Druridge Pools and East Chevington. During the month a maximum of six were at Grindon Lough including a 'singing' male and persistent arial chasing by two other birds.

**Purple Sandpiper** *Calidris maritima*

Stag Rocks was again the favoured haunt with 110 seen on 19th (ASJ). Other significant concentrations were 43 at Berwick North Shore during a WeBS visit on 12th (MHu) and 23 at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 12th (GB). At St Mary's, 14 were seen on 8th. One to eight were at Boulmer, Cullercoats, Cresswell, Football Hole (Newton), Snab Point (Cresswell) and Spital (Newbiggin).





Two shore waders by Alan Jack. Above: a Purple Sandpiper on 19th November at Stag Rocks  
and below: a Sanderling at St. Mary's 11th November





**Green Sandpiper** *Tringa ochropus*

Birds started to occupy regular winter haunts with two at Gosforth Park NR on 8th (GPK). Singles were at Haughton Strother GP on 2nd and 18th (MR), Big Waters on 19th (GB), Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 26th (MSH) and Arcot Pond on 28th (JD/LJM).

**Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia*

Two on 1st and a single on 2nd at Cresswell Pond were the only reports (DM/STE).

**Redshank** *Tringa totanus*

Howdon was again a favoured locality with 213 counted on 17th (CB). North Blyth Staithes held 143 birds on 28th (STH) and WeBS counts in the Berwick area saw 115 on the River Tweed Estuary and 72 on the North Shore on 14th-15th (MHu). 50+ were on floodwater at Annstead Farm (Seahouses) on 23rd (MSH). Other coastal counts were 42 at the River Wansbeck Estuary, 37 at Newbiggin, 30 at Newton and 24 at Howick during the first half of the month. Birds were at freshwater sites with a maximum of 17 at Backworth on 30th (GPK). One to nine were at Arcot Pond, Big Waters, Bothal Pond, Druridge Pools, East Chevington, Hauxley NWT, Holywell Pond, Lynemouth Flash and Swallow Pond.

**Jack Snipe** *Lymnocyptes minimus*

A light influx was noted on Holy Island with three present on 14th (IK). Single birds were at Backworth on five dates (GPK) at Big Waters on 1st (AJJ per GB) and at Doddington Bridge (River Till) on 25th (IRD).

**Woodcock** *Scolopax rusticola*

Coastal areas continued to see arrivals during the month with four at Newbiggin on 3rd (PRM), three 'in-off' at Seaton Sluice on 3rd (SSWT), three at the Straight Lonnen (Holy Island) on 4th (IK) with two at the Snook (Holy Island) on 11th (ADM). Singles on the coast were at Cresswell, a Craster garden, Cullercoats and Prior's Park (Tynemouth). Inland, two were at Harwood Forest on 27th (STE) and singles at Big Waters, Border Ridge, Bolam Lake, Capheaton, Howdon, Morpeth, Prestwick Carr and Swallow Pond.

**Snipe** *Gallinago gallinago*

Substantial concentrations involved 61 flushed at Callerton subsidence area on 12th (MH) and 58 at Haughton Strother on 14th (MR). At Backworth, the maximum count this month was 40 on 30th (GPK) and an influx on 25th brought at least 30 to Holy Island (IK). Other significant counts were 26 at Cresswell Pond on 1st, 17 at Arcot Pond on 13th a minimum of 15 at St Mary's Wetland on 18th and ten at Druridge Pools on 3rd. One to eight were at 15 other widespread localities.



A Snipe in the open at Howdon Wetland by Colin Bradshaw

**Pomarine Skua** *Stercorarius pomarinus*

Typical late autumn passage saw six fly N at Seaton Sluice on 6th (SSWT), two were also observed flying N on 6th at Tynemouth and Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) (DRW/IJ). A further light movement was noted on 21st-22nd when two flew N at Newbiggin, Seaton Sluice and Snab Point (Cresswell).

**Arctic Skua** *Stercorarius parasiticus*

One flew S on 5th and two N on 6th at Seaton Sluice (SSWT).

**Great Skua** *Stercorarius skua*

A significant movement of skuas at Seaton Sluice on 6th included 20 of this species flying N. Birds were also seen at Cullercoats, Newbiggin and Tynemouth (SSWT/STH/DRW/IJ). On 7th, two flew N at Snab Point (Cresswell) (MH/ADM). Later in the month two flew N at Newbiggin on 21st (CB/JGS), five N on 22nd at Seaton Sluice (SSWT) and one at Cresswell on 22nd (MH/AA). The last record of the month were two N at Tynemouth on 23rd (DRW).

**Auk** *sp*

At Seaton Sluice, significant movement was recorded during three periods, 1st-2nd with a maximum of 275 N in 1.5 hours, 6th-8th with a maximum 770 N in seven hours and 22nd-23rd with a maximum of 300 N in two hours; the majority of these birds were considered to be Guillemots (SSWT). A second observer (MSH) noted movement at St Mary's Island on 7th when 190+ per hour moved N and on the 21st when, during brief sea-watches, hourly rates of passage N were 160 and 40 at Cresswell, Snab Point and St Mary's Island respectively.

**Puffin** *Fratercula arctica*

A single record only of one at Budle Point on 19th (CGK).

**Razorbill** *Alca torda*

Two were off Newton Point on 19th (TD).

**Little Auk** *Alle alle*

Ten moved N at Seaton Sluice from 5th-7th (SSWT) and during the same period two flew N at Cullercoats, Newbiggin and Tynemouth (STH/IJ/DRW). One was at Bamburgh Stag Rocks on 15th (NNBC), three flew N at Tynemouth on 21st (SPP) and a single flew N at Tynemouth on 23rd (DRW).

**Guillemot** *Uria aalge*

At least 60 were seen at Cresswell Snab Point on 17th (PRM) and at Cheswick on 4th, 40 were present (TRD/JD). Elsewhere, 13 flew N in around two hours at Newbiggin Church Point on 27th (GB) with up to eight in the Cocklawburn area from 1st-4th (MHu). Singles were in Druridge Bay on a number of dates throughout.

**Sandwich Tern** *Sterna sandvicensis*

Two lingered, fishing all morning at Newbiggin North Bay on 18th (STH) and on the 19th another late-staying bird fished at Low Newton (TD).

**Kittiwake** *Rissa tridactyla*

Significant movement was observed on 6th when 400 per hour moved N over 4 hours at Seaton Sluice (SSWT) and a similar rate of movement was also seen the same day at Newbiggin (STH) and St Mary's Island (CGK/AJ). On 7th, 145 were recorded passing N at Cresswell Snab Point of which 60% were 1st-winter birds (MH/ADM). On a later date, 21st, 400 per hour moved N from mid-day at Cresswell Snab Point. A flock of 60 fed well off-shore at Castle Point (Holy Island) on 12th (IK) and up to eight were recorded at four other localities.

**Black-headed Gull** *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

The largest counts were 600 between Seahouses and Beadnell on 28th (JMA), 369 in the River Tweed Estuary on 14th (MHu) and 300 on the QE II CP Lake on 13th (CDH). Smaller concentrations of 100-250 were recorded at Berwick North Shore, Bothal Pond, Castle Island, Jesmond Dene, Killingworth Lake and Leazes Park (DM/MHu/TD/MJCo). At five other localities flock sizes of 30-80 were present.

**Little Gull** *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

At Tynemouth on 23rd, three flew N (DRW) and a single was seen moving N at Newbiggin Church Point on 27th (GB).

**Mediterranean Gull** *Larus melanocephalus*

A monthly total of 12 was recorded at Seaton Sluice involving an indeterminate number of individuals (SSWT) but 13 were in Village Bay Newbiggin on 14th (STH) where lesser numbers of up to six were recorded on other dates (CB/JGS/MN). Elsewhere, singles were at Holywell Pond, QE II CP Lake, Swallow Pond and Tynemouth (DM/MSH/GPK/SPP/DRW). All sightings were of adult birds.

**Common Gull** *Larus canus*

The evening roost at Budle Bay held 2,200 on 19th (CGK), 600 were at the Airey Holm Reservoir (Shotleyfield) on 3rd (IFo) and 240-270 on the River Tweed Estuary on 14th and 20th (MHu). Several counts at Grindon Lough produced a maximum of 150 (SJH) and up to 20 were at six other mainly inland localities (DM/MJCo).

**Lesser Black-backed Gull** *Larus fuscus graelsii*

Single birds, all adults, were at eight localities on various dates throughout, namely Big Waters NWT, Cramlington, Derwent Reservoir, Grindon Lough, Killingworth Lake, North Seaton, Swallow Pond and Woodhorn.,



**Herring Gull** *Larus argentatus argenteus*

WeBS surveys on Berwick (North Shore) and the Tweed Estuary included 89 and 782 respectively on 14th/15th (MHu). Castle Island held 71 on 13th (DM), 50 were at the Coquet Weir (Warkworth) on 5th (ASH/JR) with 22 at Leazes Park Lake on 23rd (DM). Single-figure counts came from three other sites.

An adult of the Northern race, *L.a. argentatus*, was on Widdrington Moor Lake on 17th (PRM).

**Caspian Gull** *Larus cachinnans*

October addition A bird was seen at St. Mary's on 12th October (JB).

The St. Mary's Caspian Gull

Jack Buckall

12th October

**Glaucous Gull** *Larus hyperboreus*

A 1st-winter bird flew N at Seaton Sluice on 5th (SSWT), presumably the same individual reported on a few occasions from 2nd-6th in the Tynemouth/Cullercoats area until it flew N again on 6th (IJ/DRW). Thereafter, on the 21st it was seen again at Tynemouth on the boating lake (DRW).

**Great Black-backed Gull** *Larus marinus*

At Seaton Sluice, 275 moved N in six hours, the maximum count there this month (SSWT). The Coquet Weir at Warkworth held 160 on 5th (ASH/JR) and on 10th there were 129 at nearby Warkworth Gut (IRD). Counts of 25-75 came from Berwick North Shore, Blyth Harbour, Budle Bay, Castle Island and the River Tweed Estuary (DM/MHu/STH) with one to three at East Chevington North NWT and Grindon Lough.

**Feral Pigeon** *Columba livia*

On 13th 54 were at Whittle Dene with 51 at Bigg Market (Newcastle) on 7th (PCF/DM) and present at Jesmond Dene during the month.

**Stock Dove** *Columba oenas*

Pre-roost gatherings at Howdon of 137 on 27th and 106 on 15th (CB) with six at Cresswell Pond on 16th and one to two at Bolam Lake, Gosforth Park and Jesmond Dene.

**Woodpigeon** *Columba palumbus*

250 were in stubble at Felton on 27th with 58 pre-roost at Howdon on 15th and 27th (CB) and 11 at Jesmond Dene on 13th (MJCo).

**Collared Dove** *Streptopelia decaocto*

Gatherings of 28 at Druridge Lane on 12th (TB), 25 leaving roost at Callerton on 13th (MH), 20 at Dinnington on 6th and 16 at Bedlington on 30th (JR) with one at Howdon on 13th being only the 3rd record there (CB).

**Barn Owl** *Tyto alba*

Two at Holy Island on 20th with a single there on 6th (ADM). Singles also at Cresswell Pond on 9th and 11th, nr Prestwick Carr on 12th, Plenmeller Common on 18th, Brocolitia (Military Road) on 19th and an A1 road casualty near Eschottheugh on 21st.

**Little Owl** *Athene noctua*

Two were at Derwent Reservoir on 6th & 30th with singles there on 4th/5th (IFo). One was at East Ord (Berwick) on 10th being the first record there since April 2004 (MHu).

**Tawny Owl** *Strix aluco*

Strangely all four records were on 4th being a pair at Prestwick Carr, and calling at Valley Park (Cramlington), Humshaugh and Wark (N.Tyne).

**Short-eared Owl** *Asio flammeus*

Numbers increased to 5 or 6 at Holy Island on 13th with three there regularly (IK/ADM) and singles from 6th, three at Prestwick Carr from 25th with single on 18th (PCF). One came in/off at Snab Point (Cresswell) on 7th with likely the same individual at Hemscott Hill on 8th, one at West Hartford on the same date and Widdrington Moor Lake on 19th.

**Kingfisher** *Alcedo atthis*

Three were at Bolam Lake on 13th (TRD/JD) with two at Branton GP on the same date and Gosforth Park on 24th (IBDa/KDa/SPP) with singles there on five dates during the month. Singles were also at an encouraging further eight inland and five coastal locations.

**Green Woodpecker** *Picus viridis*

Scarce this month with one at Prestwick Carr on 3rd (PRM) and calling at Rothbury on 20th (TRD/JD).

**Great Spotted Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos major*

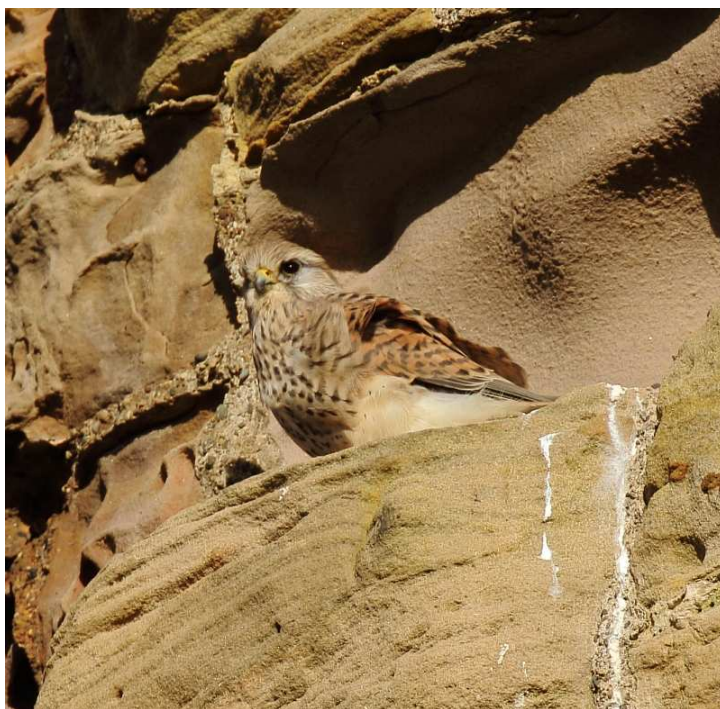
A large count of six at Wallington on 12th with three at Shiellow Woods on 16th (MJC). Two were at Bolam Lake on 5th (PRM/PCF) and Jesmond Dene on 29th (MJCo) with singles at seven other locations.

**Kestrel** *Falco tinnunculus*

Four birds were at Widdrington Moor lake on 19th (TF/JFa) and three were noted there on 17th (PRM) and 19th (TB). Three birds were also at West Chevington on 14th (MSH) and on Holy Island on 20th (ADM). Two birds were hunting together at East Cramlington LNR on 22nd (LJM). Single birds were at 23 sites.

A Kestrel at Tynemouth

by Alan Jack on 16th November

**Merlin** *Falco columbarius*

Single birds were seen at Druridge Pools on 17th (PRM), Holy Island, Elwick (ASJ) and Widdrington Moor Lake (TF/JFa) on 19th and at Holy Island causeway on 20th (ADM).

**Peregrine** *Falco peregrinus*

Single birds were at Cresswell Pond, Grindon Lough, Holy Island, Lincoln Hill, Muckle Moss, Newbiggin, Newcastle, Prestwick Carr, Seaton Sluice WT, Snab Point (Cresswell), Spittal Cliffs (Berwick), Tynemouth and Widdrington Moor Lake.

**Great Grey Shrike** *Lanius excubitor*

The wintering bird was seen regularly all month at Prestwick Carr with one also at Harwood Forest on 12th (JL).

**Magpie** *Pica pica*

On 2nd 15 were at Beacon Hill (Cramlington)(DM), nine at Jesmond Dene on 13th and two there on 11th (MJCo/JMA).

**Jay** *Garrulus glandarius*

Well reported with four the peak at Dukeshouse (Hexham) on 1st (AJH), three at Haughton Strother GP on 2nd and Bolam Lake CP on 5th (MR/PRM) and two at Arcot Pond, Big Waters, Ellington, Guyzance Mill, Prestwick Carr and Widdrington Moor Lake. Singles were at 13 other widespread localities

**Jackdaw** *Corvus monedula*

A large roost near the Water Treatment Station (Lambley) numbered 320 on 10th, 230 on 27th and 200 on 23rd (STH). 110 were at Prestwick Carr on 11th, 52 at Beacon Hill (Cramlington) on 2nd, 50 at Amble Weir on 17th, 30 at Cullernose Point on 3rd, 20 at Alnwick on 15th and six to seven at Alnwick Golf Club / Jesmond Dene.

**Rook** *Corvus frugilegus*

Unfortunately the final totals from this keen observer of corvids were 60 at Warkworth Golf Club on 30th, 50 at A1068 entrance to Alnwick on 3rd and nine at Alnwick Infirmary on 8th (JMA).

**Carrion Crow** *Corvus corone*

36 in the Blyth Estuary on 2nd (STH), 27 at Beacon Hill (Cramlington) on 2nd (DM) with five at Alnwick and Jesmond Dene.

A Carrion Crow in the sunshine

QEII Park

11th November

Tim Dean





**Raven** *Corvus corax*

A high count of four at Mozie Law (Border Ridge) on 4th (IRD), three at Langlee Crag (Harthope Valley) on the same date, Hedgehope Hill on 11th (DM/STH/PHi). Two were at Plenmeller Common on 24th and Branton GP on 25th with singles there on 19th - 20th and one over Ros Castle (Bewick Moor) on 25th.

**Goldcrest** *Regulus regulus*

Around 20 at Bolam Lake on 5th (PRM), five at Hallington Reservoir on 27th (SW) with three at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 3rd, Hareshaw Linn (Bellingham) on 18th and Bamburgh on 23rd. One to two were at eleven other widespread localities.

**Blue Tit** *Cyanistes caeruleus*

On 15th eight were at Haughton Strother GP (Humshaugh) (MR) and present at Jesmond Dene.

**Great Tit** *Parus major*

Six were at Guyzance Mill on 15th (AB/LB) and three at Jesmond Dene on 8th.

**Coal Tit** *Periparus ater*

Two at Jesmond Dene on 13th (MJCo) with singles at Hareshaw Linn (Bellingham) on 8th and 12th and Wark (N.Tyne) on 13th (PRM).

**Willow Tit** *Poecile montanus*

At Prestwick Carr three were reported on 19th/23rd and 25th (PCF/STH/TD) with two at Backworth on four dates during the month (CGK/GPK *et al.*), East Cramlington Pond NWT on 22nd (LJM) and Beaconhill (Cramlington) on 29th (STH). Singles were also at Arcot Pond, Branton GP, Smallburn (Longhorsley) and Swallow Pond (Wallsend).

**Marsh Tit** *Poecile palustris*

Singles at Thrum Mill (Rothbury) on 20th (JD) and Bolam Lake on 23rd (CW).

**Skylark** *Alauda arvensis*

Forty moved in small groups at Arcot Pond on 8th and Beaconhill (Cramlington) on 29th (STH) with 29 there on 2nd (DM), 20 at Whorral Bank (Morpeth) on 8th (TB), 12 at Bockenfield (Felton) on 1st (JR), 11 at Arcot Pond on 2nd, ten at Spittal (Newbiggin) on 12th and one to two S over Valley Park (Cramlington) and Exhibition Park (Newcastle).

**Shore Lark** *Eremophila alpestris*

A small flock of seven were found at East Chevington Burn Mouth on 23rd (TB/HG) remaining and well watched, dog walkers permitting, till the month end. At Goswick on 1st five came in/off over a Scoter flock at 10.35 (MH/AA).



A Shore Lark in flight at East Chevington Burn mouth by Colin Bradshaw



**Swallow** *Hirundo rustica*

There were three reports of late birds with two at East Chevington on 15th circling then flying off N (MH/AA) and singles at St Mary's Island on 18th and Cullercoats Bay on 20th, possibly the same individual (SPP/AJ).

**Long-tailed Tit** *Aegithalos caudatus*

The largest 'tribes' were 20 at Exhibition Park on 24th (GB), 16 at Humshaugh on 26th, 13 at Prestwick Carr on 3rd (PCF) and ten at Berwick, Ellington, Hallington Reservoir and Leazes Park. Six to nine were also reported from Arcot Lane, Bolam Lake, Cramlington (Northburn), Doddington, East Chevington and Haughton Strother GP (Humshaugh), with two to five at a further six localities.

**Chiffchaff** *Phylloscopus collybita*

Three were noted at Berwick on 11th (MJC), while singles were reported from Cramlington (Southfield Lea) on 2nd (DM), Gosforth Park from 3rd-8th, Holy Island on 5th, Alnmouth GC on 11th, East Chevington on 23rd and Druridge Pools, Hexham and Rothbury on 24th.

A single bird showing characteristics of the **Siberian form** *P.c.tristis* was with a Chiffchaff *P.collybita* at East Chevington on 23rd (TRD/JD).

**Blackcap** *Sylvia atricapilla*

Two were at St Mary's on 1st (ASJ) and a single female in a Craster garden on 12th (JMA).

**Lesser Whitethroat** *Sylvia curruca*

A late individual was at St Mary's on 1st (ASJ).

**Waxwing** *Bombus garrulus*

Following a trickle of birds at the end of last month, November produced the beginnings of a 'Waxwing year' with large flocks reported, mainly from the southern half of the county. Peak counts were 110-120 at Blyth Community Hospital from 11th-15th (MN/CB), 60-110 at Hexham from 20th-27th (AJH), 98 at Walker on 25th-26th (DRW/SPP), 90+ at Shiremoor on 27th (MSH), 70 at Corbridge on 27th (MR) and 60 at Bedlington on 7th and 25th (JR). Elsewhere counts of 40-55+ were received from Ashington, Cramlington, Elswick, Gosforth, Morpeth and Whitley Bay. Smaller groups included 24 at Tynemouth, 19 at Newbiggin, 17 at Hexham Hospital, 15 at Prudhoe and ten to 14 at East Hartford, Ellington, Hareshaw Linn (Bellingham), Jesmond and Longbenton, with one to eight at Barmoor, Big Waters, Branton GP, Howick, Swallow Pond and Wark (North Tyne).

**Nuthatch** *Sitta europaea*

Five were counted at Bolam Lake on 8th (MSH) and up to three were noted in Jesmond Dene. Reports of two came from Aydon (Corbridge) and Chugdon Wood (Ellington), while singles were noted at Arcot Pond, Cramlington (Beacon Land & Valley Park), East Ord (Berwick), Hallington Reservoir, Hareshaw Linn (Bellingham), Humshaugh and Leazes Park.



A Nuthatch descends at Wallington NT by Chris Barlow

**Treecreeper** *Certhia familiaris*

One to two were noted at Branton GP, Hallington Reservoir, Hareshaw Linn (Bellingham), Howick, Humshaugh, Leazes Park, QEII CP, Wark (North Tyne) and Wallington.





Waxwings in November  
in the south- east of the  
county

Top by Tim Dean

Middle by Chris Barlow

and bottom by Alan Jack





**Wren** *Troglodytes troglodytes*

An influx was noted in the north of the county with seven at Holy Island on 6th rising to 30 by 11th and 25 present on 20th (ADM); 12 were noted from Ross to Guile Point on 13th (MJC).

**Starling** *Sturnus vulgaris*

Some large roosts were again reported during the month, the most impressive of which was at Holy Island Lough, where 20,000 on 12th steadily declined to 6,000 by the end of the month (IK). On 18th, around 5,000 roosted at Stamfordham (EC) and 4,900 at East Chevington (MH), while numbers at the Lambley roost increased from 2,300 on 15th to 3,800 by 29th (SJH). Flocks passing overhead included 4,000+ NW at Budle Bay (towards Holy Island?-CGK), 3,500 E at Prestwick Carr on 27th (PCF) and 400 NE at West Chevington on 14th. Feeding flocks of 1,000 were reported from Goswick on 4th, Forestburngate on 5th and near Blenkinsop Castle on 7th, while 600 were noted at Alnwick, 500 at Bolam Lake and 400+ at Seahouses. Elsewhere 100-300 were reported from Derwent Reservoir, Elsdon, Grindon Lough, Monks' House, Rochester and Seaton Burn. A flock of 22 flew in off the sea at Seaton Sluice on 20th.

**Dipper** *Cinclus cinclus*

One to two were reported from Aydon (Corbridge), Bellingham (Hareshaw Linn), Breamish Valley, Bywell Bridge, Guyzance, Hallington Reservoir, Hartford Bridge (Bedlington), Ingram, Langleeford, Morpeth, Ponteland, Scotch Gill Woods, Thrum Mill, Wark (North Tyne) and Weldon Bridge.

**Blackbird** *Turdus merula*

An influx on 3rd brought 250+ to Newbiggin (PRM) and 60 came in off the sea at Seaton Sluice (SSWT); 20+ were at Bamburgh on the following day. Elsewhere, 34 were at Cramlington (Horton Burn) on 19th, 26 at Cramlington (Alexandra Park) on 3rd, 20-25 at Howdon on 2nd and 17th, 25+ at Budle Bay on 19th and 20 near Humshaugh on 28th. A count of 17 from a Gosforth garden was the highest here in 29 years and 13 were at Prior's Park (Tynemouth) on 13th. Five were at Jesmond Dene on 20th.

**Eye-browed Thrush** *Turdus obscurus*

A bitter sweet record. The first ever county record of an Eye-browed Thrush was by a dog walker from Sheffield at Bolam Lake Pheasant Field on 4th November (R Moore *per* CB). Many birders searched thereafter without success.



Eye-browed Thrush at Bolam Lake on 4th November by Ross Moore

**Fieldfare** *Turdus pilaris*

The largest flocks were at Prestwick Carr and Callerton with 400+ on 10th and 400 on 12th respectively (MSH/MH). Flocks of 300 were at Humshaugh on 27th (SW) and Pigdon on 12th (JR) and 200 at Guyzance on 15th (AB/LB). At Derwent Reservoir a total of 160 moved SW on 3rd, 150+ were at Airy Holm Reservoir (Shotleyfield) on 6th, 150 were at Grindon Lough on 10th and 80 at Ford on 24th. Elsewhere 50-70 were noted at Bolam Lake, Coanwood Common, Hareshaw Linn (Bellingham), Longhorsley and West Ord (Berwick). Up to 40 at a further 13 localities included birds coming in off the sea at Cullercoats and Seaton Sluice on 3rd.



**Song Thrush** *Turdus philomelos*

About 20 were at Prestwick Carr on 3rd (PRM), five were in the dunes at Boulmer on 25th (AB/LB), four at Howdon on 2nd and one to two at Jesmond Dene and Prior's Park (Tynemouth).

**Redwing** *Turdus iliacus*

The hedgerows at Prestwick Carr were popular, attracting 200-222 from 3rd-10th (PRM/MSH), rising to a peak of 300 on 25th (TD), with 100 still present on the following day. Elsewhere, 120+ were at Bolam Lake on 5th (PRM), 80-100 in the Humshaugh area from 8th-27th (SW/MR) and 50-75 at Derwent Reservoir, Ford, Grindon Lough, Guyzance Mill, Swallow Pond and Wark (North Tyne); 20-40 were reported from Aydon (Corbridge), Big Waters, Hareshaw Linn (Bellingham), Howdon and Longhorsley with up to 18 at a further 12 localities.



A Redwing at Prestwick Carr by John Littleton on 17th November

**Mistle Thrush** *Turdus viscivorus*

One to two were noted at Berwick, Big Waters, Catton, Exhibition Park, Jesmond Dene, Leazes Park, Wark (North Tyne) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

**Robin** *Erithacus rubecula*

An early month influx produced 53+ at Newbiggin on 3rd (PRM) and up to 23 at Holy Island on 6th (ADM). Further counts from the latter locality included 14 on 11th and 16 on 20th, while five were at Jesmond Dene on 8th.



A Robin at Chevington by Chris Barlow

**Black Redstart** *Phoenicurus ochruros*

At Cullercoats Bay an immature/female was present from 5th-8th (IJ/ASJ) and an adult male from 12th-20th (IJ/ASJ *et al.*). The immature/female may have been the same bird found at nearby St Mary's Island on 10th (SPP), while a male was in Newcastle City Centre (next to St Nicholas Cathedral) from 10th to the month end (DM/GB); another male was found at Berwick on 21st (NNBC).



A popular bird at Cullercoats  
A Black Redstart by Alan Jack on 18th November

**Stonechat** *Saxicola rubicola*

Peak monthly counts were ten from Long Nanny to Newton on 19th (TD), eight from St Mary's to Old Hartley on 1st (ASJ), five at Cocklawburn and at Druridge Pools and four at Warkworth Gut. Up to three were noted at Newbiggin and two at Goswick, Harwood Forest, Holy Island, Prestwick Carr and West Hartford with singles also at Berwick Moor, Boulmer, Cullercoats Bay, East Chevington, Hedgeley Lakes, Tynemouth and the Wansbeck Estuary.

**Dunnoek** *Prunella modularis*

Under-recorded with a single report of a bird in Jesmond Dene on 29th (MJCo).

**House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus*

Three groups totalling 73 were noted roosting at Southfield Green (Cramlington) on 19th (DM). The previous day, 70 seen at Cullercoats Bay and at Holywell (MN/ASJ). 40 were at Annstead dunes on 28th (JMA). Five to 18 were at four further sites.

A cock House Sparrow

Newbiggin

Chris Barlow





**Tree Sparrow** *Passer montanus*

35 at Fenwick Lodge (Stamfordham) on 13th was the largest group this month (MH). 15 were seen near Longhorsley on 28th and at Holywell on 29th (AB/LB/ASJ). Ten counted at Cresswell on 1st (DM/STH). One to eight were at seven other sites during the month.



An unusual sighting in a Gosforth garden.  
By Simon Elliott on 13th November

**Grey Wagtail** *Motacilla cinerea*

Singles were noted at three Jesmond Dene sites on 8th (MJCo). Two were seen at St Mary's, Bamburgh and Whittle Dene during the month. One to two were seen at 22 further sites, mainly in the east of the County.

**Pied Wagtail** *Motacilla alba*

15 at Prestwick Carr on 24th, increased to 50 on 25th which was the month's largest gathering, with 40 there next day (TD/MN). 22 fed along the beaches at St. Mary's on 1st(ASJ) and 20+ noted at Backworth on 24th (CGK). Ten were at the burn mouth at Chevington on 4th (MH). Five were at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 18th and four flew W at Grindon on 15th (STH/SJH).



A Pied Wagtail on Chevington beach by Colin Bradshaw



**Richard's Pipit** *Anthus richardi*

One flew N over the north pool at East Chevington calling on the morning of the 13th (TFa/JFa).

**Meadow Pipit** *Anthus pratensis*

50+ at Backworth on 26th was the monthly peak, with 40+ feeding on insects on seaweed at St. Mary's, before gradually moving S. on 1st. 15 also at the latter site on 21st (CGK/ASJ). 21 were seen at Prestwick Carr on 24th (PCF). Eight were in flight at Newcastle Town Moor on 8th (GB). Elsewhere, one to four were noted at five sites, including four birds inland at Langleeford in Harthope Valley on 4th (DM/STH).



A Meadow Pipit struts its stuff

Chevington beach

by Colin Bradshaw

**Rock Pipit** *Anthus petrosus*

23 counted across Holy Island on 6th, with 19 still there on 20th, though only seven were found on 11th (ADM). 12 were feeding at St. Mary's on 1st and three at Cullercoats, including one in gardens on 18th. Four were at Tynemouth on the same day (ASJ). 11 were at Newbiggin on 3rd and ten on 4th at Berwick Little Beach (PRM/TRD/JD). Nine were noted along Ross beach to Guile Point on 13th and eight at Howick on 18th (MJC). One to seven were at a further eight coastal sites during the month and one at north pool East Chevington on 1st (DM/STH).

**Water Pipit** *Anthus spinoletta*

Two were found at Druridge Pools on 26th. Singles were at East Chevington also that day and at Boulmer on 21st (TFa/JFa/CB/JGS).

**Brambling** *Fringilla montifringilla*

Several birds attended garden feeders at Stamfordham during the month, then 34 arrived feeding on local Beech Mast on 22nd (EC). 20 were with Chaffinches at Guyzance Mill on 15th (AB/LB). Six were noted at Wallington on 12th (MJC). One to five were also seen at five further locations during the month.

**Chaffinch** *Fringilla coelebs*

Ten were at Guyzance Mill on 15th and two in Jesmond Dene on 8th, and in a Marden Estate garden on several dates.

**Bullfinch** *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

12+ were seen at Newbiggin on 3rd (PRM). 12 were noted at Shiellow Woods on 16th and 11 at Prestwick Carr on 19th (MJC/PCF). Eight birds were at Wallington on 12th (MJC). One to six were seen at a further 13 sites during November.



A Brambling

Bolam Lake

Chris Barlow

**Greenfinch** *Chloris chloris*

Eight were at Rockcliffe (Cullercoats) was the largest reported group (IJ). Up to four were in the observer's garden during the month at Morpeth (TD). One to four were at three other sites.

**Linnet** *Carduelis cannabina*

Once again, some large flocks were noted with 180-200+ at set aside at Elwick on 19th in dunes at East Chevington on several dates (ASJ). 160-170 were still near Briar Dene Farm (Whitley Bay) on 22nd as last month's huge flock dispersed. Around 100 were in fields at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 19th (ASJ). 100 were at Big Waters on 27th (AJJ *per* GB). 66 were noted at Berwick Holiday Park on 16th (MHu). Smaller numbers noted included 31 at Newbiggin on 3rd and 30 at St. Mary's on 8th (PRM/ASJ). 20 were at Longhorsely on 7th (AB/LB), and 15 at Newbiggin (Spital) on 12th.

**Twite** *Carduelis flavirostris*

Chevington burn mouth attracted the largest flock this month, with around 100 feeding along the tide-line on 28th and 42 there the following day (SPP/MH). 40 were at Sugar Sands (Howick) on 1st (JMA). The Holy Island flock remained with 38 on Snook on 11th and 20-25 fed alongside the road on 13th (ADM/IK). 16 were noted at Fenham Le Moor on 4th (TRD/JD/DM/STH). One to ten were at four further sites during the month.

**Lesser Redpoll** *Carduelis caberet*

Around 40 were seen at Grindon on 15th, with 30 here on 29th. 40 were also at West Hartford on 17th (SJH/TB). 18 birds were feeding at Derwent Reservoir on 29th (IFo). 12 were at Bolam and Prestwick Carr during the month (PCF). Eight were seen at Langleeford on 4th (DM/STH). Two to four were observed at four further sites.

**Crossbill** *Loxia curvirostra*

Six flocks totalling 68 birds were noted at Harwood Forest on 27th (STE). 15 were seen there on 12th and at Shiellow Woods on 16th (JL/MJC). One to four were at eight further inland sites.

**Goldfinch** *Carduelis carduelis*

Berwick Holiday Park hosted 126 feeding in Alders on 15th (MHu). Around 120 were also at East Chevington on 11th (HP). 110 were noted at Swallow Pond on 16th (GPK). Smaller flocks of ten to 26 were seen at eight other sites and one to seven at six sites.

**Siskin** *Carduelis spinus*

Bolam Lake held a foraging flock of birds on 5th, variously counted as they split and reformed of 30, 50+, 60+ and 80-100 (MSH/PRM/ASJ/SPP/TFa/JFa). 40+ were at Wark on 13th (PRM). 30+ seen at Ladyburn Lake on 8th (LJM). 25 were at Big Waters on 19th (GB). One to 13 were at seven other sites.

**Snow Bunting** *Plectrophenax nivalis*

A hard climb paid off as around 30 were found at the summit of Hedgehope Hill in the Cheviots on 11th (PHI). Seven (three males) were at Goswick on 3rd (AA/MH). Four were found at Sugar Sands (Howick) on 1st (JMA). Two were found during the month at Westwood Moor (Wooler), Ross beach and Druridge Links (MJC/DM/STH). Singles were at South Beach (Blyth) on 1st and a very confiding bird at Emmanuel Head (Holy Island) on 11th (DM/STH/ADM).

**Lapland Bunting** *Calciarius lapponicus*

Singles were observed between Ross and Guile Point on 13th and more unusually, well inland at Plenmeller Common on 24th (MJC/PRM).

**Yellowhammer** *Emberiza citrinella*

30 were near the tin church at Low Newton on 19th (TD). 16 was a good count at Beacon Lane (Cramlington) on 2nd, with two and three birds at further local sites (DM). Eight were at Smallburn (Longhorsely) on 28th (AB/LB). A single was seen at Big Waters on 13th.

**Reed Bunting** *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Ten at Big Waters on 27th was the largest count this month (AJJ per GB). Seven were at St. Mary's on several dates and at Holy Island on 19th (ASJ). Five inland at Hareshaw Linn on 18th (PRM). One to three noted at six coastal sites and at Grindon Lough during November.

**ESCAPES, HYBRIDS AND BIRDS OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN****Escapes****Bar-headed Goose** *Anser indicus*

Again noted with the two at Humshaugh seen last month again present on 2nd (MR). Possibly the same two individuals turned up at Grindon Lough on 10th and stayed through to 13th (SJH / MRS).

**Hybrids****Tufted Duck x Pochard** *Aythya fuligula x Aythya ferina*

The individual noted previously at Swallow Pond was present throughout the month there (SPP).

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**Apologies for any accidental omissions****BULLETIN COMPILATION AND PRODUCTION**

This bulletin was compiled by Graeme Bowman (Mute Swan to Ruddy Duck), Steve Laing (Red Grouse to Black-necked Grebe), Trevor Blake (Honey-buzzard to Crane), Tom Brewis (Avocet to Godwit), Clive Hampton (Turnstone to Skua), Eddie Crabtree (Puffin to Great Black-backed Gull), Tim Dean (Escapes, Hybrids and Unknown Origin, List of Contributors, Highlights), Peter Fletcher (Feral Pigeon to Red-rumped Swallow), Mike Richardson (Cetti's Warbler to Pied Flycatcher), Alan Jack (Dunnock to Corn Bunting), Kathy Evans (WeBS Coastal Counts) and Steve Holliday (WeBS Inland Counts).

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**RECORD SUBMISSION**

Please email records for the month to [ntbc.records@googlemail.com](mailto:ntbc.records@googlemail.com)

Please email for a copy of the standard spreadsheet and other details.

Location names and grid references: Please use standard location names and include grid references as this greatly increases the value of records in subsequent analyses. A 1km square grid reference is the ideal e.g. NY8067 for Grindon Lough, but 2km square references (tetrads) are also acceptable e.g. NY86D in this case. A list of localities and their tetrad grid references (tetrad/Locality List) can be downloaded from the 'Resources & Downloads' section of the Club website at <http://www.ntbc.org.uk> – the use of these names, wherever possible, would be highly appreciated.

Could club members ensure they to submit records direct to NTBC rather than just Birdtrack. There may be an assumption by some members this happens automatically. We do not want to miss records.



## PHOTOGRAPHS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Please keep submitting your articles, photographs, sketches and illustrations for the bulletin. Thanks again to those who have supplied the excellent photographs. Please send to Steve Barrett at [NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com](mailto:NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com)

It is preferable if you re-size your photos before sending and a suggested size is 640 x 480 pixels. Please ensure you include the following information with your submissions: name, species, date taken, locality. Photographs will not be used elsewhere without the photographer's permission.

## MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Annual membership costs £10 for a junior, £30 for an individual, and £32 for a family. For membership enquiries please contact [ntbc@jobentley.plus.com](mailto:ntbc@jobentley.plus.com)

Membership subscriptions were due at the beginning of October. If you internet bank you can pay online: please include your name in the ref. It is helpful if you email me to let me know when you've made the transfer [ntbc@jobentley.plus.com](mailto:ntbc@jobentley.plus.com)

If you decide to set up a standing order please date the first payment at least a fortnight from your posting date to allow time to process with the bank. You can also set up your standing order directly with your bank if you wish; just let me know.

Finally, if you know anyone who might like to join NTBC please pass on the club information - new members are always welcome.

**Jo Bentley - Hon Treasurer**

## NTBC WEB SITE

The Club website is an excellent resource for all interested in birds in the north-east. There are numerous interesting sections, including a photograph gallery, site information and trip reports together with extensive reference information for birding in our area. Please submit any new content for the website to the main club email address.

## NTBC SIGHTINGS PAGE

The Sightings Page contains current reports by members. Access is from the NTBC website and an email notification is available for new postings. Members need to submit a request to be added to the website, specifying the email address they wish to post from before they can submit sightings to [ntbcorg@gmail.com](mailto:ntbcorg@gmail.com)



A Black-tailed Godwit at Howdon Wetland by Colin Bradshaw

## INLAND WeBS COUNTS: NORTHUMBERLAND

Version:

## Interim

Year: 2016  
Month: NOVEMBER

[illegible]

# Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club

Registered Charity No. 517641

<http://www.ntbc.org.uk/>

Bulletin 2016 No 12

MONTHLY SUMMARY DECEMBER 2016

1st February 2017



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NTBC Website information update

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Great Grey Shrike

Shorelark

Siberian Chiffchaff

Waxwing

Black Redstart

Water Pipit

Juvenile at Whittle Dene Reservoirs from 8th.

Influx from mid-month.

Influx from mid-month.

Redhead still at Bolam lake through until 10th.

Late passage at Seaton Sluice with seven seen in month and last on 21st.

Three at Gosforth Park and a single at East Chevington.

Wintering individual seen at North Shields Fish Quay and flew over river on 5th.

Wintering bird at Budle Bay from 2nd.

First-winter in Tynemouth area seen again on 3rd.

One present all month at Prestwick Carr.

Group of seven at East Chevington remained all month.

One at Tynemouth and two at North Shields mid-month.

Influx continued with many flocks.

Singles at Cullercoats, Rockcliffe and North Blyth.

Single at Druridge Pools on 9th.

## INDOOR MEETINGS

NTBC indoor meetings are held at Northern Rugby Club, McCracken Park, Great North Road, Newcastle, NE3 2DT starting at 7.00pm and generally finish between 9.00pm-9.30pm.

**February 9th Tim Dean** will reveal all the avian splendours seen on a recent trip to **Arizona**.

**March 9th John Callion** will talk on 'Memories of Dotterel' - a personal journey, telling the story of his ornithological development, leading to his 'discovery' of the species in the golden period of the 1970s and '80s.

'A Bittern at Gosforth NR

a drawing by Mike Henry

## FIELD TRIPS

Please contact Steve Anderson for details  
[seaswan@btinternet.com](mailto:seaswan@btinternet.com)

The following spring trips are not to be missed:

**April 23rd Langholm** Harriers and more  
Steve Anderson

**May 21st Kielder** Raptors and more  
Martin Davison

**May 28th Geltsdale** Upland birds tbc





**CLASSIFIED LIST****Mute Swan** *Cygnus olor*

Peak counts were 46 at Loanend (Berwick) on 18th (MHu), 43 at QEII CP Lake on 16th (CDH), 41 on the River Tyne at Howdon on 19th (CB), 38 at West Ord (MHu), 19-25 at Big Waters, East Chevington, Killingworth Lake and the Tyne Estuary. Six to nine were also at Cresswell Pond, Newcastle Exhibition and Leazes Parks, Whittle Dene Reservoirs and Widdrington Moor Lake.

**Bewick's Swan** *Cygnus columbianus*

A single juvenile was at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 8th (PRM) and 11th (TRD/JD).  
An adult was at Backworth on 26th November 2016 (CGK/GPK *et al.*).

**Whooper Swan** *Cygnus cygnus*

Generally poor numbers included peaks of 19 at Newton Pool on 29th (TD), 15 at Cresswell Pond on 27th (GB/DM/LAR), and ten at Loanend (Berwick) and Warkworth Lane. One to four were also noted at Backworth, Bothal Pond, East Chevington, West Ord and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.



A Whooper Swan stretches its wings

Druridge Country Park

Chris Barlow

**Bean Goose** *Anser fabalis*

A small influx of 'Tundra' *rossicus* race birds was evident beginning with one at Cresswell Pond on 17th (TF/JFa). Five were at Ellington on 31st (TB), five between Druridge Pools-East Chevington on 23rd (GB), three at Backworth on 26th and two there on 28th-29th (MSH/CGK/GPK), three at the former Longhirst Flash on 23rd (TD/TF/JFa), two at Big Waters on 20th (GB) increased to three by 22nd (PRM/SPP), and two at Cresswell Pond and Druridge Pools on 22nd (MSH), and Outchester on 27th (MSH). Three un-raced birds were at West Holywell on 28th (MNC).

**Pink-footed Goose** *Anser brachyrhynchus*

Northerly movement involved 450 at Berwick on 30th (MHu), 100-120 at Cramlington and Morpeth, and 36-90 at Middle Ord, Seaton Sluice, Stamfordham and Swallow Pond, while 200 flew SW at Nunnykirk on 30th (TRD/JD), 80-110 S at Tynemouth on 17th and 27th, and 70 E at Prestwick Carr. At least one was heard flying over Hexham during darkness on 19th (PRM). Peak concentrations involved 3,000 at Bell's Farm (Druridge Bay) on 27th (DM *et al.*), 1,300 at Outchester on 27th (SMH), 1,100 at the former Longhirst Flash on 22nd (TF/JFa), 1,070 at East Chevington on 4th (IRD), 1,000 at Cresswell (TB), and 820 at Backworth (CGK/GPK). Smaller numbers included 442 near Whitley Bay cemetery (MSH), 150-200 at West Holywell and West Stobswood, and 20-50 at Bothal Pond, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge Pools and Woodhorn.

**White-fronted Goose** *Anser flavirostris*

Eurasian *albifrons* race birds involved a peak of at least 25, including six to seven first-winter birds, at Backworth on 31st. Three to 20 were noted there between 26th-30th (MSH/CGK/GPK). At the former Longhirst Flash 18 were present on 23rd (PCF) and 14-16 on 22nd and 24th (TD). Ten adults were at Grindon Lough on 22nd (PRM), eight near Derwent Reservoir on 29th (IFo), four at Druridge Pools on 22nd (IRD) increasing to seven on 23rd (TF/JFa), six adults at Cresswell Pond on 22nd (MSH), five (four adults) at Outchester on 27th (MSH), and two adults at Big Waters on 22nd (PRM/SPP). Birds of the Greenland *flavirostris* race included seven (one first-winter) at Cresswell Pond on 22nd (IRD), one at the former Longhirst Flash on 23rd (TF/JFa) and two there on 24th (TD).

Un-raced birds involved 21 at West Holywell on 28th (MNC), and three at Prestwick Carr on 28th (PCF).

**Greylag Goose** *Anser anser*

30 flew S at Cramlington on 17th (DM). Castron held 480 on 17th (JD), 300 were near Derwent Reservoir on 29th (MNC), 300 were at Outchester on 27th (MSH), 300 at West Holywell on 23rd (MNC), 220-260 at Backworth, Prestwick Carr and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, and 125-150 at Big Waters and East Holywell. Counts of 62-95 came from Cocklawburn, Druridge Pools and Woodhorn, 22-48 at East Ord, Grindon Lough, the former Longhirst Flash and Lynemouth Flash, and 15 at East Chevington.

**Canada Goose** *Branta canadensis*

Variable numbers at Grindon Lough included a peak of 307 on 2nd (PRM). Peak counts elsewhere involved 175 at Bothal Pond on 29th (TF/JFa), 150 at Druridge Pools on 22nd (MSH), 116 at Big Waters on 25th (GB/AIB), 85 at the former Longhirst Flash (TD), and 22-43 at Killingworth Lake, Newcastle Leazes Park, QEII CP Lake, West Ord and Widdrington Moor Lake. Three to four were at Hauxley Reserve and Linton Ponds.

**Barnacle Goose** *Branta leucopsis*

500+ were at Harper's Haugh (near Budle Bay) on 27th (MSH), five were at Grindon Lough on 8th (PRM), and one to two at Cresswell Pond, QEII CP Lake and Snab Point.



A Barnacle Goose at QEII Country Park  
Chris Barlow  
28th December

**Brent Goose** *Branta bernicla*

800 pale-bellied *hrota* race birds were at Fenham Flats on 2nd (TRD/JD), 80 at Harper's Haugh (near Budle Bay) on 27th (MSH), and 30 at Monks' House on 2nd (TRD/JD).

Dark-bellied *bernicla* race birds included 60 at Harper's Haugh (near Budle Bay) on 27th (MSH), two at Cresswell on 6th (MH/AA), two at the Tweed Estuary on 16th (MHu) and two S at Seaton Sluice on 15th (SSWT).

Un-raced birds included 400 at Fenham Flats on 19th (IRD).

**Shelduck** *Tadorna tadorna*

1,055 were at Fenham Flats on 19th (IRD) when 126 were at Budle Bay (IRD). Six to seven were also at Amble and Howdon (CB), four at Elswick (DM), and two at Cresswell Pond.

**Mandarin** *Aix galericulata*

A drake was at Tyne Green (Hexham) on 27th (AJR).

**Wigeon** *Anas penelope*

Four flew N at Seaton Sluice on 3rd (SSWT), 450 were at Derwent Reservoir on 3rd (IFo), 423 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 27th (SR), 409 at Amble on 1st (PRM), 400 at Beadnell (IRD), 225-260 at Bothal Pond (TD), Branton GP (TRD) and Grindon Lough (AJR), and 150 at Outchester. Groups of 62-93 were at Gosforth Park NR, Hauxley Reserve, Linton Ponds and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, and 18-43 at Big Waters, Plenneller Common, QEII CP Lake, the Tweed Estuary and Woodhorn Flashes. Smaller numbers elsewhere included one on pond at Linden Hall golf course (NFO).





A fine drone Wigeon at QEII CP on 28th December by Chris Barlow

**Gadwall** *Anas strepera*

Peak counts were 28 at Swallow Pond on 7th (GPK), 23 at the Blyth Estuary on 30th (GB), 19 at Big Waters on 18th (GB), and ten to 16 at Bothal, Holywell and Linton Ponds, and St Mary's Wetland. Five to eight were also at Branton GP, Caistron, East Chevington, Howdon and Killingworth Lake and West Stobswood, four at Hauxley Reserve and St Mary's Wetland, and two at Arcot Pond, QEII CP Lake, Widdrington Moor Lake and Woodhorn Flashes.



Gadwall at Howdon Wetland by Colin Bradshaw

**Teal** *Anas crecca*

The monthly total at Seaton Sluice was 61 N and six S (SSWT). About 800 were at Holy Island during the month, split between the 'rocket fields', the lough and Chare Ends (IK). Whittle Dene Reservoirs attracted a peak of 525 on 20th (SR), 276 at were at Derwent Reservoir on 4th (IFo), 250 at Howdon on 11th (CB), 230 at Bothal Pond on 29th (an exceptionally large number for the site; TF/JFa), 163-191 at Amble and Arcot Pond (DM/LJM/PRM), and 120-138 at Backworth, Castle Island and Grindon Lough. Groups of 50-75 were at Caistron, East Chevington, Hauxley Reserve, Linton, Middle Ord and Swallow Ponds, and St Mary's Wetland, and 12-47 were at Elswick, Gosforth Park NR, Prestwick Carr, the Tweed Estuary and West Ord.

**Mallard** *Anas platyrhynchos*

202 were at Derwent Reservoir on 6th (IFo), 184 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 4th (SR), 61 at Boulmer on 1st (PRM), and 36-56 at Bothal and Cocklawburn Ponds, Castle Island, Chirton Dene Park, Grindon Lough, Killingworth and QEII CP Lakes, the Tweed Estuary and Wallsend Dene. Counts of 14-29 came from Arcot Pond, Byker, Hauxley Reserve, and Linton\* and Newsham Ponds, and Newcastle Exhibition and Leazes Parks. \* display and copulation noted (CDH).



A drake Mallard

Howdon Wetland

by Colin Bradshaw



#### **Pintail** *Anas acuta*

One flew N and four S at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). At Fenham Flats, Lindisfarne NNR, 221 were present on 13th (MH/AA) and 110 on 19th (IRD). Three were at Druridge Pools on 27th (DM *et al.*), and one to two at Big Waters, Cresswell Pond, Druridge Pools, Grindon Lough and the Tweed Estuary.

#### **Shoveler** *Anas clypeata*

Peak counts involved 49 at Swallow Pond on 5th (GPK), 30 at Budle Bay (a notable count for the site) on 19th (IRD), ten to 13 at Big Waters (GB), Druridge Pools (TRD/JD) and Gosforth Park NR (AJR), five to six at Arcot and Bothal Ponds, Grindon Lough, and Killingworth Lake. Singles were at East Chevington, Linton Ponds and St Mary's Wetland.

#### **Pochard** *Aythya ferina*

14 were at Widdrington Moor Lake on 3rd (GB), 14 (ten drakes) at Bothal Pond on 28th (IFo), and five at Killingworth Lake on 19th (DM).

#### **Tufted Duck** *Aythya fuligula*

Peak concentrations were 76 at Ladyburn Lake on 28th (IFo), 62 at Killingworth Lake on 19th (DM), 55 at East Chevington on 1st (PRM), 30-35 at Newcastle Exhibition Park, QEII CP Lake and Swallow Pond, 23-27 at Bothal, Holywell and Swallow Ponds, and Newcastle Leazes Park, and 13-18 at Linton Ponds and Silverlink LNR. Five to seven were at Cresswell Pond, Grindon Lough, Hauxley Reserve, Howdon and Jesmond Dene, and one was with Goldeneyes at the Tweed Estuary on 31st (MHu).

#### **Scaup** *Aythya marila*

Five fed in the main channel at Holy Island causeway on 12th (IK), five were at Hauxley Reserve on 25th (HRS), three at East Chevington on 1st (PRM) and singles there on several dates to 28th, and a pair at Widdrington Moor Lake on 27th (GB/DM/LAR). One well inland at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 4th (SR) increased to four by 13th (SR).

#### **Eider** *Somateria mollissima*

The monthly total at Seaton Sluice was 39 N and 11S (SSWT). There was a general lack of any large gatherings, peaks being 38 at Needles Eye (Berwick) on 8th (MHu), 34 at North Shields Fish Quay on 11th (DRW), 26 at Boulmer (PRM) and Meadow Haven, Berwick (MHu), and 12-19 at Amble, Berwick North Shore, Blyth Harbour and Seaton Sluice. Three to seven were also at Cullercoats, Hartley Bay, Rockcliffe and the Tweed Estuary.

A drake Eider

Seahouses harbour

Alan Jack



#### **Long-tailed Duck** *Clangula hyemalis*

Seven flew N at Seaton Sluice during the month, including four on 3rd (SSWT). A peak of 87 was noted at Stag Rocks on 27th (MSH) where six to 75 were reported throughout the month (TF/JFa/IRD *et al.*), and 15 were at nearby Ross Back Sands on 28th (TF/JFa). Four to five were at Football Hole on 29th (TD) and Whitley Bay on 18th and 22nd (GPK/IJ), and singles at Boulmer, Newbiggin and North Blyth. One remained at Bothal Pond all month, having been present since November 2016 (TF/JFa *et al.*), and one was at Druridge Pools on 14th (TRD/JD). Further inland, a drake was at Grindon Lough on 18th-19th (PRM/MRS).

#### **Common Scoter** *Melanitta nigra*

A total of 98 flew N and 47 S at Seaton Sluice (in 13 hours; SSWT) during December, and ten flew N at Cullercoats on 4th (MSH). The sole three-figure count was of 156 at Cocklawburn on 19th (MHu), while 55 were at North Blyth on 13th (LJM), and 12-20 off East Chevington and Whitley Bay. Three to five were also at Boulmer, Newbiggin and Stag Rocks.

**Velvet Scoter** *Melanitta fusca*

Two flew N at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). One at North Shields Fish Quay was variously described as a female, juvenile, immature male and first-winter male, and remained between 3rd-13th (DRW/LJM *et al.*). A female was at North Blyth on 12th-13th (STH/LJM).



The Velvet Scoter which frequented North Shields Fish Quay by Alan Jack

**Goldeneye** *Bucephala clangula*

A total of 14 flew N at Seaton Sluice on 3rd (SSWT). East Chevington north pool held an impressive 104 on 1st (PRM), 72 were at the Tweed Estuary on 16th (MHu), 40 at Castle Island on 30th (GB), 30-36 at Bolam Lake (AJR), and 24 at New Water Haugh. Ten to 18 were found at Football Hole, Grindon Lough, Killingworth and QEII CP Lakes, West Ord and Whittle Dene Reservoirs, and six to nine at Bothal Pond and Hauxley Reserve.

**Smew** *Mergellus albellus*

A 'redhead' was at Bolam Lake between 1st-10th (TF/JFa/NFO/AJR).

**Red-breasted Merganser** *Mergus serrator*

Eight at Druridge Pools on 22nd (IRD) increased to ten on 23rd (TF/JFa), eight were at the Blyth Estuary on 30th (GB), seven at Stag Rocks on 28th (TF/JFa), four to five at Berwick North Shore, Druridge Bay (offshore), East Chevington, Ladyburn Lake, Spittal Bay, and the Tweed and Wansbeck Estuaries. One to two were also at North Blyth, Boulmer, Castle Island, Cresswell Pond, Hauxley Reserve and Newbiggin.

**Goosander** *Mergus merganser*

Two flew N at Seaton Sluice on 3rd (SSWT) and four S at Newbiggin on 9th (STH). Largest count involved 17 at Killingworth Lake on 29th (GB), 15 at New Water Haugh on 1st (MHu), 11 at Close House on 31st (MH), ten at Branton GP (TRD), and six to eight at Airy Holm (IFo) and Whittle Dene (SR) Reservoirs, and the Tweed Estuary (MHu). One to two were also at Bellingham, Bolam Lake, Derwent Reservoir, Dilston, Felton, Rothbury and Warkworth.



A Goosander  
Janet Dene  
Rothbury  
5th December



**Red-legged Partridge** *Alectoris rufa*

Some good counts included 21 at Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay) on 31st (MNC), totals of 17 at Middle Stobswood on 3rd (GB) and Barhaugh Burn on 6th (EC) followed by 11 at Preston Tower on 20th (TB). Two were at Big Waters NWT on 18th.

**Red Grouse** *Lagopus lagopus*

14 were at Plennmeller Common on 2nd (PRM).

**Grey Partridge** *Perdix perdix*

A minimum of 17 were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 8th (PRM) and two coveys comprising a total number of 16 birds were at Callerton subsidence area on 16th (MH). Ten were in a stubble field at Stobswood on 27th (DM *et al.*) and one to nine were at several other easterly locations.

**Pheasant** *Phasianus colchicus*

Three were at Brier Dene Farm on 31st (MNC) and a single female flying across the entrance road to Howdon Wetland on 23rd was the observer's first record at that site (CB).

**Red-throated Diver** *Gavia stellata*

The total for the month at Seaton Sluice was 11 N and 25 S (SSWT). Ten were offshore at Cocklawburn on 19th (MHu) and eight were within the confines of the Tyne Estuary piers on 10th GB). At least seven were loafing offshore at East Chevington towards the end of the month and one to five were reported widely along the coastal area.

**Black-throated Diver** *Gavia arctica*

The sole record was one flying S past Seaton Sluice on 7th (SSWT).

**Great Northern Diver** *Gavia immer*

Seaton Sluice Watch Tower observed a total of four – two N and two S – between 2nd-18th (SSWT) and Stag Rocks proved a favourable location towards the end of the month with a peak of four present on 27th (MSH).

**Fulmar** *Fulmarus glacialis*

At Seaton Sluice the passage totals were 21 S in one and a half hours on 20th (SSWT). At Howick Bay, 26 were paired up either settled on or flying around the cliffs on 18th (TD) and two to three birds were seen returning to their cliff nest sites at several other locations.

**Gannet** *Morus bassanus*

The total for the month at Seaton Sluice was 33 N and four S (SSWT). One to five were reported from other coastal locations.

A Cormorant

Howdon wetland

by Colin Bradshaw

**Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo*

The largest count was a minimum of 119 at North Shields Fish Quay on 4th (MSH), followed by a peak of 69 in Blyth Harbour on 13th (STH). 24 were reported during a WeBS count at Berwick North Shore on 14th (MHu), 20 were at Amble on 1st and 17 were at Derwent Reservoir on 2nd (PRM). One to 12 were at many other localities including one landing in the middle of a winter wheat field at Ancroft (TB).

**Shag** *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

Only three S from Seaton Sluice (SSWT). Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) peaked at 30 on 2nd (TRD/JD) and 17 were present during a WeBS count at Berwick North Shore on 14th (MHu). One to six were recorded from other locations throughout the coastal area.







A Bittern at Gosforth NR by Chris Barlow

**Bittern** *Botaurus stellaris*

After hosting two last month, Gosforth Park NR held three individuals by 13th, often showing well with two of them watched fighting and squawking at times (GPK/SPP/MH/AJR/GB). November's East Chevington bird was still present throughout (MH/AA/NFO).

**Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta*

Three were in a field adjacent to the Horton Burn at Boghouses (Cramlington) on 1st (TB) and one to three were at Big Waters NWT, Blyth Estuary, Branton GP (possibly a site first), Budle Bay, Cresswell Pond, Holywell Dene, Horton (Blyth), Lindisfarne NNR, Prestwick Carr, River Wansbeck, Swallow Pond, the Tweed Estuary and Valley Park (Cramlington) – a first for this locality.

**Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea*

Howdon Wetland peaked at 18 on 18th (CB) and 13 were at Widdrington Moor Lake on 13th (MSH). 11 were on staithes at North Blyth on 10th (STH) and Seaton Sluice Watch Tower reported at total of nine sightings during the month of birds passing close inshore. Four were on the River Tyne between King Edward VII Bridge–Newcastle Business Park on 19th (DM) and one to three were at several other localities.

**Little Grebe** *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

The peak at Castle Island was 12 on 2nd (STH) and East Chevington North Pool peaked at eight on 27th (DM/STH/PJA). Hauxley NWT had seven on 25th (HRS) and one to three were at many other typical locations.

**Great Crested Grebe** *Podiceps cristatus*

Six were at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 4th (SR) and the only other record was a single bird at Derwent Reservoir on 17th that was noted as very unusual at this site for the time of year (IFo).

**Red-Necked Grebe** *Podiceps grisegena*

Only one sighting of this increasingly rare winter visitor - on the sea at St Mary's on 18th, and only present for 20 minutes (SPP).

**Slavonian Grebe** *Podiceps auritus*

A count of seven feeding in singles across the flats at St. Cuthbert's Island (Holy Island) on 17th (IK) was followed by a total of nine at Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) on 28th (TF/JFa). Two were at Ross Back Sands on 28th.

**Red Kite** *Milvus Milvus*

Two birds were at Snods Edge on 5th (IFo) and singles were recorded at Low Waskerley on 18th and 24th (IFo).

**Marsh Harrier** *Circus aeruginosus*

A female was at East Chevington on 1st (PRM) and it or another female was at Maiden's Hall on 5th (MH).

**Hen Harrier** *Circus cyaneus*

Up to three different birds were seen in the Druridge Bay area including a 1st-year male on 3rd (IF) and on 20th (MH/AA), a female and a juvenile were seen throughout the month (PRM *et al.*).



**Goshawk** *Accipiter gentilis*

A bird flew over the A1 towards the coast at Scremerston on 4th (BWG).

**Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter nisus*

Only single birds were noted this month from Ashington, Bedlington, Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay), Choppington, Cramlington, Druridge Pools, East Cramlington, Ellington, Exhibition Park (Newcastle), Gosforth, Jesmond Dene, Preston Tower, Rockcliffe, Silloans Farm (MOD range), West Hartford, Widdrington Moor Lake and Widdrington Village.



Rothbury. A Sparrowhawk after a collision with Tim Dean's window, 15th December

**Common Buzzard** *Buteo buteo*

Four birds were observed at Prestwick Carr on 14th (PCF) and at Crookham on 18th (JR) and on 15th three birds noted at West Hartford were a pair chasing another bird away to the East (TB). Two birds were seen at Ancroft, Dudlees Farm (MOD range), Milkwell (Corbridge), Plenmeller Common, Prestwick Carr and at west Hartford. Single birds were at 14 sites during the month.

**Water Rail** *Rallus aquaticus*

Six birds were at East Chevington on 1st (PRM) and up to four birds noted on several dates (TF/JFa *et al.*), up to four birds were present at Holy Island Lough on 17th (IK). Two birds were at Swallow Pond on 10 days throughout the month (GPK *et al.*), two were at Prestwick Carr on 3rd (PCF) and two were calling at Gosforth Park on 6th (AJR). Single birds were at Arcot Pond, Big Waters NWT, Chirton Dene Park (North Shields), Cresswell Pond, Prestwick Carr and at Woodhorn Flashes.

**Moorhen** *Gallinula chloropus*

32 birds were at Castle Island on 13th (STH/DM/PJA), 20 were on the Chirton Dene Park (North Shields) on 5th (MSH), 17 birds were at Woodhorn Flashes on 10th (STH) and at Royal Quays (North Shields) on 27th (CDH). 16 Birds were seen at Big Waters NWT on 25th (GB), 14 were at QEII CP on 16th (CDH) and 12 birds were at Silverlink Park LNR (North Shields) on 12th (MSH). One – six birds were at nine sites.



A Moorhen at Howdon wetland by Colin Bradshaw



**Coot** *Fulica atra*

The highest counts came from Swallow Pond (Wallsend) with 110 birds on 5th and 114 birds on 13th (SPP). Other high counts were 62 at East Chevington on 1st (PRM), 39 at QEII CP on 16th (CDH), 30 at Big Waters NWT on 18th (GB), 20 at Bothal Pond on 27th (TD), 19 at Killingworth Lake and 16 at Exhibition Park (Newcastle) on 19th (DM).

**Oystercatcher** *Haematopus ostralegus*

Berwick North Shore recorded a record count for the WeBS site on 14th when 328 birds were seen (MHu). The only other three-figure count came from St Mary's, where 146 were recorded on 12th (ASJ). 71-77 birds were counted between 1st-12th at North Blyth Staithes (STH), while 63 were seen at Rockcliffe on 26th (IJ) and 54 were counted at Hauxley NWT on 25th (HRS). Earlier in the month 50 birds were reported from Cullercoats Bay on 9th (MN). Counts of less than 50 came from Cresswell (Snab Point), Cresswell Pond, Ladyburn Lake and Tweed Estuary.



Oystercatchers at Bamburgh by Alan Jack on 10th December

**Golden Plover** *Pluvialis apricaria*

Birds were present throughout the month at St. Mary's with a peak count of ca. 900 (ASJ). Seaton Sluice had 800 birds in coastal fields on 27th (STH) while inland counts at Derwent Reservoir reached a maximum of 650 on 4th (IFo). Over 400 birds were seen at both Big Waters NWT and Druridge Pools on 25th and 28th, respectively (GB, IFo). Cocklawburn held 252 and nearby Salt Pan Rocks had a roost of 160 on 5th (MHu). Browns Bay (Cullercoats) had 200 birds on 18th (IJ) while earlier in the month, on 2nd, Grindon Lough held 185 (PRM). Cresswell Pond recorded 182 on 10th (IRD). Boulmer had 106 birds on 1st (PRM) and 100 were counted at Blyth Links on 19th (TB). Counts of less than 100 came from Amble, Blyth (Laverock Hall), Cocklawburn, Corbridge (Stagshaw), Cullercoats Bay, Monks' House Pool, Prestwick Carr, Shield-on-the-Wall and Whittle Dene Reservoirs.

**Grey Plover** *Pluvialis squatarola*

Ten birds were reported in the Blyth Estuary on 30th (GB). A count of nine was made at Newbiggin Beacon Point on 9th (STH) and from further north, a count of eight was made at Cocklawburn on 19th (MHu) with a further count of seven at Budle Bay on 2nd (TRD/JD). Counts of two to three came from Bamburgh (Stag Rocks), Berwick (Little Beach), Cocklawburn and Hauxley (Bondicarr).

**Lapwing** *Vanellus vanellus*

The largest count was from Derwent Reservoir on 9th when a peak count of 850 (IFo) was made, with the same site holding over 350 birds on 2nd (PRM). On the coast, 750 were reported from East Chevington on 11th (AJR) and a movement of 420 birds between 8th-16th was reported from Seaton Sluice Watch Tower (SSWT). Harper's Heugh (Budle Bay) recorded 400+ birds on 27th (MSH) and Cresswell Pond NWT had 380+ birds on 11th (AJR) which declined to 300+ birds by 13th (MSH) and to 200 by 27th (MD). Other sizeable counts were 300 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 13th (SR) and 250 at Bothal Pond (Coney Garth) on 17th (TB) - an increase from the 200 birds seen there on 11th (TF,JFa). The Tweed Estuary held 242 on 16th (MHu), there were between 220-240 birds at Grindon Lough on 2nd and 19th, respectively (PRM), 220 at New Water Heugh, on the Tweed, on 4th (MHu) and 201+ birds seen at Boulmer on 1st (PRM). Counts of between 175-200 birds came from Big Waters NWT (200 on 25th, GB) and from coastal fields in Seaton Sluice (200 on 27th, STH), as well as Cresswell Pond and West Hartford, where two flocks were seen flying eastward (ca. 175 on 4th, LJM). Other counts came from Bamburgh (Waren Mill), Bellshiel (MOD range), Blyth Links, Cocklawburn, Cramlington, East Chevington, Grindon Lough, Howdon, Plenmeller Common, Prestwick Carr and St Mary's.



**Ringed Plover** *Charadrius hiaticula*

A high-tide roost on a factory roof in Blyth South Harbour held 92-97 birds on 13th (LJM, STH). 84 birds were counted at Cocklawburn on 19th (MHu), 59 at the Long Nanny, Newton on 11th (IRD) and 36-42 were at the South Pool outlet at East Chevington on 11th and 14th (AJR, TRD/JD). Newbiggin Beacon Point reported 40 on 9th (STH), with 22 at Tynemouth on 7th (DRW). Reports of 13 or fewer birds came from Amble, Berwick (Little Beach), East Chevington (Chibburn Mouth), Cullercoats Bay and Fenham-le-Moor.



A Ringed Plover at St Mary's  
by Alan Jack

**Curlew** *Numenius arquata*

Over 203 birds were seen at Boulmer on 1st (PRM) and ca. 200 were in a high-tide roost at Cresswell Pond on 14th (TRD/JD). A WeBS count at Caistron recorded 110 on 17th (JD), while 64-86 birds were seen at Cocklawburn on 5th and 19th, respectively (MHu). A further 64 birds were seen at Woodhorn on 18th (DM) and another high-tide roost of 49 was reported from Newburn Riverside on 29th (IFo). Howdon had 42 birds on 30th (CB) and Whitley Bay (Foxhunters Fields) had 41 on 23rd (ASJ), while 35 were reported at Amble on 1st (PRM), 32 at Woodhorn Flashes on 20th (GB) and 31 at Old Hartley on 16th (CDH). Counts of 30 or less came from Berwick (North Shore), Big Water NWT, Bothal Pond (Coney Garth), Callerton subsidence area, Castle Island (Wansbeck), Cresswell (Snab Point and Pond), Druridge Pools, Hauxley NWT, Tweed Estuary, Tyne (Elswick to Newcastle Business Park) and West Stobswood.

**Black-tailed Godwit** *Limosa limosa*

Significant numbers continued to be present throughout the month with 64 at Amble Braid on 1st (PRM) and 18 birds at Howdon on 1st, which increased to 24 on 9th and then 25 on 26th (CB). Boulmer reported 16 birds on 1st (PRM) and throughout the month birds were present on the Rocket Fields at Holy Island with 13 on 10th and ten on 31st being the highest winter counts on the island for some years (IK).

**Bar-tailed Godwit** *Limosa lapponica*

Reports were few and far between. The largest counts were in the Berwick area with ten at Little Beach on 29th, eight in the Tweed Estuary on 16th and five on the North Shore on 14th (MHu). Given the close proximity of these sites it is possible that these counts involved some of the same individuals. Three birds were at Budle Bay on 2nd (TD/JD) and another three were at Hauxley NWT on 25th (HRS).

**Turnstone** *Arenaria interpres*

The WEBS count at Berwick North Shore again produced the highest number of birds with 68 counted on 14th (MHu). Also in the north of the county, 42 were at Cocklawburn 19th (MHu). In the South East, 46 were at Newbiggin Beacon Point on 16th and 26 at North Blyth staithes on 1st (STH). Elsewhere during the month, 18 were at Amble, 16 at Boulmer, 18 at Cresswell, 12 at the River Tweed Estuary, 11 at Hauxley and ten at Stag Rocks. Singles were at Blyth South Harbour, East Chevington and North Shields Fish Quay.

**Knot** *Calidris canutus*

Few groups were reported, with the largest being 63 at Amble on 1st (PRM). On 19th, 40 were at Stag Rocks and Cocklawburn (IRD/MHu). The high numbers reported from Lindisfarne in previous months had dwindled, with a maximum of 30 reported from Budle Bay on 2nd (TRD/JD). The only other report was a single at Cresswell Pond on 27th (GB/DM).

**Sanderling** *Calidris alba*

A flock in the Chiburn Mouth - East Chevington area of Druridge Bay was well reported during the month with a maximum of 130 on 14th (TRD/JD/TD *et al.*). At Newbiggin village bay the highest count was 71 on 1st (STH) and, a few miles further south, 47 were at St Mary's Island on 27th (STH/ASJ/AJN). At Cocklawburn, 32 on 19th increased to 54 by 27th (MHu). Smaller groups seen were 18 at Berwick North Shore, 23 at Boulmer, 16 at North Shields Fish Quay and seven at Blyth South Beach.

**Dunlin** *Calidris alpina*

The River Blyth Estuary area remained popular with 130 on North Blyth staithes on 1st increasing to 295 by 12th. On 13th 145 were at a high tide roost on a factory roof and 295 were counted in the estuary on the same date (STH/LJM). A high-tide roost at Cresswell Pond held 200 on 14th (TRD/JD), 110 were at New Water Haugh (River Tweed) on 4th (MHu), 106 at Amble on 1st (PRM) and 104 at Cocklawburn on 19th (PRM). Other significant counts were 86 at Newbiggin Beacon Point on 16th, ca.80 at Boulmer on 1st and 75 at Tynemouth (STH/PRM/DRW). Six -38 were at four localities in the Berwick area and 20 were at Fenham-le-Moor.

**Purple Sandpiper** *Calidris maritima*

Stag Rocks (Bamburgh) held the highest numbers as in November, with a maximum of 116 seen on 27th (MSH). The WeBS count at Berwick North Shore revealed 52 on 14th and 24 were at Cocklawburn on 19th (MHu). Smaller numbers were seen further south with 18 on the east pier at Blyth Harbour, eight at Boulmer, ten at Cullercoats, 11 at Newbiggin Beacon Point and seven at St Mary's Island during the month.

**Common Sandpiper** *Actitis hypoleucos*

A very late bird was seen in flight at North Shields Fish Quay heading towards South Shields on 5th (CB).

**Green Sandpiper** *Tringa ochropus*

Wintering birds were seen in typical quarters at Thropton (River Coquet) on 15th (JD) and Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 4th and 22nd (SR/PRM). A calling bird flew off from the old Longhirst Flash site on 23rd (TF/JFa).

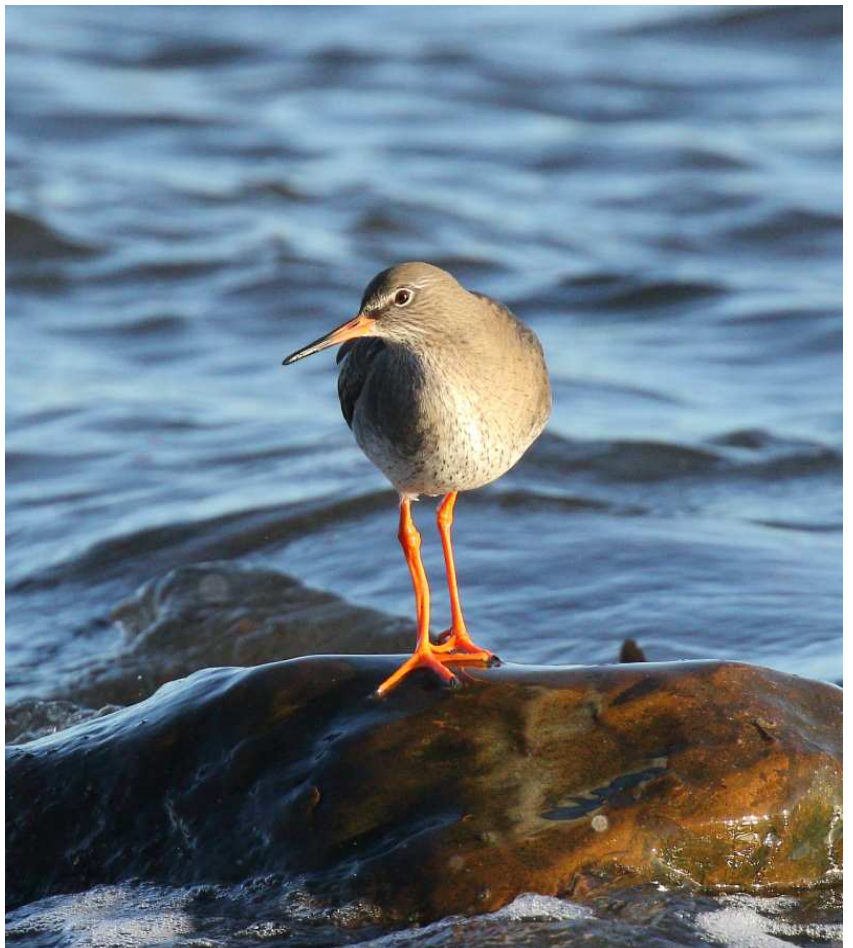
**Spotted Redshank** *Tringa erythropus*

A late or possibly wintering individual was seen at Budle Bay on 2nd (TRD/JD).

**Redshank** *Tringa totanus*

Numbers increased at Howdon from November reaching a peak of 316 on 9th (CB) and numbers built up rapidly at North Blyth from 142 on 1st to 314 on 12th (STH). The regular WeBS survey in the River Tweed Estuary recorded 156 on 16th and 127-130 were recorded at roosts at St Mary's Island and St Mary's Wetland on 10th and 27th (ASJ/CDH). Other significant counts were 96 at Berwick North Shore on 14th (MHu), 85 at Cresswell Pond on 10th (IRD), and 73-78 at Newbiggin Bay and Beacon Point on 12th-16th (STH). At Boulmer a minimum of 54 was reported on 1st, 50 at Cullercoats on 9th and 48 at Amble on 1st. Birds at freshwater sites included 50 at Cresswell Pond on 27th, 25 at Lynemouth Flash on 22nd and an 'unprecedented' 20 at Bothal Pond on 17th, 18 at Druridge Bay CP on 27th and 16 at West Ord (Berwick) on 20th.

One to nine were at Backworth, Derwent Reservoir (exceptional here in December), Hauxley NWT, Killingworth, River Tyne between Elswick and Northumberland Business Park and West Stobswood. A bird ringed at Welwick Saltmarsh Ponds (River Humber) on 29 October 2016 was attracted north by the delights of Newbiggin on 29th (STH).



A Redshank in the sun at St. Mary's  
Alan Jack on 22nd December

**Jack Snipe** *Limnocryptes minimus*

Singles were seen at Howdon, Newburn Riverside and West Hartford on several dates between 1st-22nd (TB/CB/IFo).

**Woodcock** *Scolopax rusticola*

Two were reported at Prestwick Carr on 6th and 16th (PCF) and two were at East Chevington on 28th (TF/JFa). Singles were at Beanley, Ellington, Swallow Pond and Valley Park (Cramlington) during the month.



**Snipe** *Gallinago gallinago*

Newburn Riverside attracted a large group of 77 feeding over a wide inundated area on 22nd (IFo). As in November, birds were present at Callerton subsidence area, with 67 flushed from two bogs on 16th (MH). The maximum number reported at Arcot Pond was 30 on 21st (STH), 27 at Cresswell Pond on 10th (IRD) and 22 at Prestwick Carr on 6th (PCF). Birds were still well inland with 15 at Plenmeller Common on 2nd and ten at Grindon Lough on 8th (PRM). Other double figure counts were 15 at Backworth on 27th (CGK/GPK) and 12 at Summerhouse Lane (Newbiggin) on 20th (GB). One –seven were at nine other mainly lowland sites. One was heard over Rockcliffe (Whitley Bay) on 31st (IJ).



A Common Snipe by Colin Bradshaw  
Howdon wetlands

**Arctic Skua** *Stercorarius parasiticus*

Four flew N at Seaton Sluice on 2nd-3rd (SSWT). This concluded the very low numbers of this species recorded during 2016.

**Great Skua** *Stercorarius skua*

At Seaton Sluice a 'well below average' total of eight flew N during the month (SSWT).

**Auk** *sp*

At SSWT very small numbers were recorded with more than ten per hour up to the 20th .

**Razorbill** *Alca torda*

Only one to two were noted at Cresswell (Snab Point) and at Berwick (Spital Bay). Two were on the sea off SSWT on 3rd .

**Guillemot** *Uria aalge*

Recorded in small numbers of one to five at Berwick, Boulmer, Cocklawburn, Seahouses, the River Tyne Estuary and Whitley Bay (GB/TRD/JD/MHu/PRM).

**Sandwich Tern** *Sterna sandvicensis*

At Seaton Sluice, four late-staying birds were seen moving N between 1st-3rd (SSWT).

**Black-headed Gull** *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

The evening gull roost at Derwent Reservoir held 1,300+ on 2nd (PRM). Smaller counts comprised 450 at Howdon (CB), 224 at Berwick (North Shore) (MHu), 213 at North Blyth Staithes (STH) and ca.100-200 at Arcot Pond, Castle Island, Cramlington (Alexandra Park), Exhibition Park Lake, Jesmond Dene, Killingworth Lake, QEII CP Lake and the River Tweed Estuary (MJCo/CDH/DM/MHu). Gatherings elsewhere of up to 90 were noted at three other localities, Bothal Pond, Leazes Park and Linton Ponds.

**Mediterranean Gull** *Larus melanocephalus*

The monthly recorded movement past Seaton Sluice totalled four N and one S (SSWT). Good numbers were present at favoured Newbiggin with 42 on the 10th, the majority being on the playing fields and, on the previous day, 37 were counted moving between the playing fields and nearby Woodhorn Flashes; eight were in Village Bay on 20th (all STH). Elsewhere, one or two were seen at Holywell Pond, North Shields Fish Quay, Shiremoor, SSWT and at Swallow Pond where an adult Danish-ringed bird, white ZNV, was present regularly (GPK *et al.*).

**Common Gull** *Larus canus*

A large roost of 8,600+ was present at Derwent Reservoir on 2nd (PRM) and elsewhere, on various dates throughout, 100 were at Rochester (JR), 70 at Grindon Lough (PRM), 38 in the Tweed Estuary (MHu) and 32 at Cramlington (Alexandra Park) (DM). Small numbers of one to 16 were at five other localities.



**Lesser Black-backed Gull** *Larus fuscus graelsii*

Two were sighted at Dilston (Corbridge) on 30th and at a nearby garden site a single was recorded from 17th-20th (RB/MB). Single birds, mainly adults, were also at five other localities, Cramlington, North Shields Fish Quay, the River Tweed Estuary, Swallow Pond, and West Hartford (TB/IF/MHu/GPK/DM/SPP/DRW); a very dark-plumaged first-winter bird at Tynemouth boating lake on 10th, seen also at the Fish Quay, and originally considered possibly to be of the *L.f. fuscus* race, was finally confirmed as *graelsii/intermedius* (GB).

**Herring Gull** *Larus argentatus argenteus*

The largest gatherings came from a WeBS survey on the Tweed Estuary on 16th where 242 were counted (MHu) with 80 at Newbiggin and ca.55 at Berwick (North Shore), Castle Island and the Wansbeck Estuary (DM/STH/MHu). One to 20 were also at seven other sites.

**Iceland Gull** *Larus glaucoideus*

A first-winter roosted in the gull flock at the River Coquet weir, Warkworth on 29th (KW).

**Glaucous Gull** *Larus hyperboreus*

An immature was on the Black Middens Rocks at Tynemouth on 3rd (DRW).

**Great Black-backed Gull** *Larus marinus*

Totals of just over 100 were counted in the Wansbeck Estuary on 2nd (STH) and at nearby Castle Island on 18th (STH/STH/PJA), and 11 were in the River Tweed Estuary on 16th (MHu). At five other localities, one to five were present.

**Feral Pigeon** *Columba livia*

On 2nd at dawn 438 left roosts on the High Level, Swing and Tyne Bridges (Newcastle) (DM), 104 at Blyth South Harbour/Quayside on 13th (LJM), 100 at Low Hall Farm (Hadston) on 11th (JR) with one to 12 at Southfield Green (Cramlington) and Jesmond Dene.

**Stock Dove** *Columba oenas*

A large count of 66 at Howdon on 19th (CB) with 14 at Big Waters on 18th and seven on 11th (GB). Five were at Backworth on 30th, four at Grindon Lough on 7th, three at Whitley Bay Cemetery on 24th and two at Jesmond Dene on 12th.

**Woodpigeon** *Columba palumbus*

At Seaton Sluice on 27th 320 were in coastal fields (STH), 70 at Prestwick Carr on 31st and 11 in Jesmond Dene on 12th.

**Collared Dove** *Streptopelia decaocto*

A gathering of 20 at Dinnington on 4th (PCF), 11 at Horton Burn (Cramlington) on 2nd (LJM) with five at Southfield Green (Cramlington) on 24th and Linton Ponds on 16th.

**Barn Owl** *Tyto alba*

Singles were noted at Straight Lonnen and the Lough (Holy Island) on 17th (IK), Ashington on 2nd (TB), Whittle Dene on 8th (PRM) and East Chevington on 28th (TF/JFa).

**Little Owl** *Athene noctua*

Two were at Derwent Reservoir from 24th till month end with singles there from 20th (IFo). Singles were also at Meggie's Burn (Seaton Sluice) on 10th, Prestwick Carr on 14th and West Stobswood on 27th.

**Tawny Owl** *Strix aluco*

At least four called at Ellington on 29th with three calling on 13th (TB). Singles called at Shotleyfield on 2nd, Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 10th and the observer's garden at Fulbeck (Morpeth) on 22nd.

**Short-eared Owl** *Asio flammeus*

Up to three were at Prestwick Carr all month with sightings most evenings, however rarely before 16.00 and never hunting in daylight (PCF). One was at Cresswell Pond on 27th (DM/GB/LAR).

**Kingfisher** *Alcedo atthis*

Two at separate locations in Jesmond Dene on 4th and R.Wansbeck (Morpeth) on 17th (MJCo/TD). Singles were at Burn Mouth East Chevington NWT on 1st, 6th and 10th, Big Waters NWT on 4th, R.Coquet (Rothbury) on 7th, Wallsend Dene on 10th, Seaton Sluice Watch Tower on 16th, Ouseburn / Quayside (Newcastle) on 17th, Castle Island (R.Wansbeck) and Hartley Bay on 18th, East Chevington on 28th and Close House (Wylam) on 31st.

**Great Spotted Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos major*

All sightings singles at Holywell Dene on 3rd, a first garden feeder record in 27 years at Northburn (Cramlington) on 6th (LJM), Valley Park and Barns Park (Cramlington) on 9th, Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 10th, Killingworth on 13th, Jesmond Dene on 26th, Druridge Bay CP on 27th, Stamfordham on 28th and Dilston (Corbridge) on 31st.

**Kestrel** *Falco tinnunculus*

Four birds were at East Chevington on 1st (PRM) and two at East Chevington dunes on 3rd (AJN). Two birds were at Horncliffe on 18th (JR). Single birds were at over 20 sites including a male feeding on worms at the roadside in Blyth on 19th (TB).

**Merlin** *Falco columbarius*

A young male was noted regularly throughout the month at The Snook (Holy Island) (IK) other birds were males at West Ord (Berwick) on 11th (MHu), Clifton (Morpeth) on 18th (JR) and at Quarry House Moor on 26th (MH). An unsexed bird was seen at Budle Bay on 28th (TF/JFa) and causeway on 20th (ADM).

**Peregrine** *Falco peregrinus*

Single birds were at Backworth on 28th (MSH), Druridge Pools on 28th (IFo), Emmanuel Head (Holy Island) on 10th (IK), Fenham le Moor on 2nd (TRD/JD), Grindon Lough on 15th (PRM), Harper's Heugh (near Budle Bay) on 27th (MSH), River Tweed on 4th (MHu), Seaton Sluice on 16th (SSWT). A 1st-year bird stooped in off the sea and flushed the Shore Larks at East Chevington on 5th (MH).



A Peregrine at Fenham le Moor by Tim Dean on 2nd December

**Great Grey Shrike** *Lanius excubitor*

The overwintering individual remained at Prestwick Carr all month.

**Magpie** *Pica pica*

Cramlington was the place to roost with 52 at Whitelea Chase on 16th, 33 at Northumberlandia on 17th, 27 at Valley Park on 11th and 33 there on 31st (STH/DM). Ten were at Prestwick Carr on 31st with five at Jesmond Dene on 4th.

**Jay** *Garrulus glandarius*

A large gathering of around 100 flew west at Hexham on 2nd (AJH). Elsewhere three at Eschott on 17th (MSH) and one to two at nine other widely spread localities.

**Jackdaw** *Corvus monedula*

Around 700 at dawn in a mixed *corvid* roost at Whittle Dene on 8th with 350 there in the afternoon of 17th (PRM/PCF) and 11 at Jesmond Dene on 18th (MJCo).

**Rook** *Corvus frugilegus*

One report of around 200 at dawn in a mixed *corvid* roost at Whittle Dene on 8th (PRM).

**Carriion Crow** *Corvus corone*

On 30th 17 were at Highshaw Farm (MOD range) on 30th (JR) and four at Jesmond Dene on 18th (MJCo).

**Raven** *Corvus corax*

Two were at Mootlaw Quarry (Ryal) on 4th and remained until 10th (ALT). Two were also at Featherwood (MOD range) on 30th (JR) and a single was at Widehope on 3rd (JD).

**Goldcrest** *Regulus regulus*

Three at Big Waters NWT on 22nd and two at East Chevington NWT on 1st (PRM). Two were at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 10th with singles at Cramlington, Derwent Reservoir, Jesmond Dene, Leazes Park and Milkwell (Corbridge). One was heard at Jesmond in full song under a street light at 01.20 on 22nd, an unusual record for this species (GB).

**Blue Tit** *Cyanistes caeruleus*

At Spindleston on 18th 27 were trapped (23 were ringed plus four retraps) (BRS) and three were at Jesmond Dene on the same date (MJCo).

**Great Tit** *Parus major*

At Spindleston on 18th 14 were trapped (12 were ringed plus two retraps) (BRS) and three were at Jesmond Dene on the same date (MJCo).

**Coal Tit** *Periparus ater*

On 18th 8 of 14 were trapped and ringed with four re-traps (BRS), six were at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 4th (DM) and four were at Jesmond Dene on 18th (MJCo).

**Willow Tit** *Poecile montanus*

Four at Prestwick Carr on 10th & 19th (PCF/JD), three together in hedge at Warkworth Lane (Ellington) on 20th (GB), two at Longhirst on 1st, Derwent Reservoir on 2nd, Prestwick Carr on 17th and Big Waters NWT on 20th with singles at Linden Hall (Longhorsley) and Felton.

A Willow Tit which has been visiting a Woolsington garden since October

28th December by John Littleton

**Marsh Tit** *Poecile palustris*

On 15th two were at Morwick Mill (Warkworth) (MJC) with singles at Linden Hall on three dates from 17th to 25th and at Bolam Lake on 4th, Scotch Gill Woods (Morpeth) on 17th, Wallington on 18th and Mitford Castle on 31st.

**Skylark** *Alauda arvensis*

High counts of 35 at St Mary's Island on 3rd (SPP) and 30 at Backworth on 27th (CGK) with eight at West Stobswood on 27th, five calling over stubble at Callerton and at Middle Stobswood on 27th and three at Beacon Hill Cramlington on 28th.

**Shore Lark** *Eremophila alpestris*

The gang of seven remained at East Chevington Burn mouth all month.

Shore Larks by Mike Henry

**Long-tailed Tit** *Aegithalos caudatus*

The largest reported 'tribes' were 16 at Valley Park (Cramlington) on 11th (DM), 15 at North Shields on 18th (CB), 11 to 11+ at East Chevington and Howdon and ten at Leazes Park and at Prestwick Carr. Counts of six to eight came from Alexandra Park (Cramlington), Bothal Village and Lower Ouseburn, while two to four were reported from a further nine localities.

**Chiffchaff** *Phylloscopus collybita*

Two were at St Mary's Wetland on 30th (GB) and Tynemouth on 17th (DRW), while singles were noted at Druridge Pools on 27th (GB/DM), East Chevington on 1st and 20th (PRM/MH/AA) and Horton Park (Cramlington) on 12th.

Two birds showing characteristics of the **Siberian form** *P.c.tristis* were at North Shields on 18th (CB), while a single presumed to be of this race was at Tynemouth on 17th (DRW).







*Tristis* warbler at North Shields on 18th December by Colin Bradshaw

**Blackcap** *Sylvia atricapilla*

Singles were at Berwick on 1st (BWG) and at Tynemouth on 17th and 26th-28th (DRW).

**Waxwing** *Bombycilla garrulus*

The largest gatherings may all have referred to the same mobile birds. Flocks of 135 were at Manors Metro station (Newcastle) and 130+ at nearby Walker on 24th (DRW/SPP); also in the same area, 100+ at Byker on 18th (DM) had declined to 60 by 20th (DRW) and still further to 12 by 22nd (SPP). A flock of 50 was at Gosforth Garden Village on 19th (NJC), while elsewhere in the Newcastle area four were at the Great North Museum on 2nd (GB) and five at Jesmond Dene on 26th (MJCo). Another flock of 30+ at Stobhill Manor (Morpeth) on 4th (TF/JFa) had declined to seven by the end of the month. Counts from the Tynemouth area included 11 on 14th, 18 on 17th, 35 on 18th (DRW) and seven S on 31st (ASJ). Further inland, 28 were at Hexham on 8th (AJR), 14 were here on 17th (AJH) and 20 at Prestwick (Dobbies car park) on 18th (PCF); one to two were at Wark (North Tyne) on 9th and 23rd (PRM).

**Nuthatch** *Sitta europaea*

Five in Jesmond Dene on 18th was the highest count (MJCo). Three were noted at Chugdon Wood (Ellington), two at Holywell Dene and at Leazes Park and singles at Bebside and Spindlestone.

**Treecreeper** *Certhia familiaris*

Two were at Spindlestone and singles at Bebside, Corbridge, Derwent Reservoir, Jesmond Dene and Rothbury.

**Wren** *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Six were reported from Callerton subsidence area on 16th, five at West Hartford on 24th and two at Jesmond Dene on 18th.



An alert Wren at Tynemouth by Colin Bradshaw



**Starling** *Sturnus vulgaris*

The roost at Holy Island Lough declined from 12,000 on 10th to 8,000 by the end of the month (IK). A single flock of ca.10,000 flew E over Widdrington Moor Lake towards East Chevington on 3rd (GB), when 2,000 were also noted feeding in fields at Middle Stobswood (GB). Flocks of 1,000 were reported from Elsdon and Otterburn on 29th (JR), 500 flew E at Prestwick Carr on 31st, 450 were at Grindon Lough on 22nd and 300 at Derwent Reservoir on 2nd. Counts from the MOD ranges on 30th included 250 at Silloans Farm, 76 at Featherwood, 57 at Dudlees Farm and 100 at nearby Ottercops Farm. A further 200 were at Cullercoats Bay on 31st.

**Dipper** *Cinclus cinclus*

Two were at Rothbury on 7th and at Scotch Gill Woods (Morpeth) on 17th. Singles were also reported from Bywell Bridge, Corbridge, Dilston, Fontburn, Furnace Bridge (Bedlington), Hagg Bank (Wylam), Holywell Dene, Mitford, Ponteland and Wark (North Tyne).

**Blackbird** *Turdus merula*

Counts of 16 came from Howdon on 5th and 12 at Prestwick Carr on 17th and at Prior's Park (Tynemouth) on 11th. Two were noted at Jesmond Dene on 4th and singles were in song at Chapel House on 24th and West Chevington on 26th (MH).

**Fieldfare** *Turdus pilaris*

Some large gatherings were noted on the Otterburn Ranges (JR) on 30th, at Silloans Farm (300), Dudlees Farm (195) and Featherwood (184). In addition 130 were at Grindon Lough on 19th, 120 at West Holywell on 23rd, 100+ at Corbridge from 18th-20th (RB/MB) and 85 near Milbourne on 17th (EC). Smaller groups of three to 33 were reported from a further five localities.



A Fieldfare at Prestwick Carr by John Littleton

**Song Thrush** *Turdus philomelos*

Singing birds were noted at Callerton on 16th, Chapel House on 17th and Tweedmouth on 28th. One to two were also reported from Benton Quarry Park, Big Waters, Jesmond Dene and Prestwick Carr.

**Redwing** *Turdus iliacus*

The largest gatherings were 115+ at Swallow Pond on 13th (SPP) and 100 at Corbridge on 17th (RB/MB). Elsewhere 40-45 were noted at Holywell Dene and Warkworth Lane, 30-35 at Backworth and Blucher and 22-24 at Cramlington and Grindon Lough. Counts of 16 came from Harwood Forest and Howdon with one to seven at a further seven localities.



**Mistle Thrush** *Turdus viscivorus*

Counts of six came from East Chevington on 3rd and Backworth on 17th (GB/CGK). Four were at Chugdon Wood (Ellington) on 10th and two at West Chevington on 3rd and Widdrington on 27th. One to two were noted at Corbridge throughout the month, while singles were at Exhibition Park on 1st (singing) and 12th, Chibburn, Linden Hall and West Stobswood.



A Thrush at Tynemouth by Alan Jack

**Robin** *Erithacus rubecula*

Only one report; four at Jesmond Dene on 4th (MJCo).

**Black Redstart** *Phoenicurus ochruros*

A single immature/female was noted at Cullercoats Bay throughout the month (ASJ/MSH/MN). A female was at North Blyth (Alcan) on 10th (STH) and a male was reported from the roof of the Rockcliffe Arms (Whitley Bay) on 27th (IJ).

**Stonechat** *Saxicola rubicola*

Peak counts were six at Cocklawburn on 10th (BWG), four at Cresswell Pond on 10th (IRD) and two pairs at Prestwick Carr on 20th (MH/AA) and at Quarry House Moor on 26th (MH). Counts of up to two came from Boulmer, East Chevington, Lindisfarne NNR (Granary Point) and St Mary's Island, while singles were also noted at Chibburn, Drift Café (Cresswell), Druridge Pools, Hepburn (Ros Castle), Meggie's Burn (Seaton Sluice), North Blyth, Plenmeller Common, Ryal and Stag Rocks (Bamburgh).

**Dunnoek** *Prunella modularis*

Two at Pet's Corner (Jesmond) was the only report this month.

**House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus*

A flock of around 70 were at Cullercoats all month (MN/ASJ). Elsewhere, 42 were noted at Whittle Dene on 11th and 22 at Southfield Green (Cramlington) on 16th, with 12 at Harwood Forest on 27th (DM/CB). 12 in a Marden Est. garden all month (a quarter of previous winter numbers) and ten were at Valley Park (Cramlington) (ASJ/DM).

**Tree Sparrow** *Passer montanus*

55 on 15th at Brier Dene Farm (Whitley Bay) was the largest flock seen this month (MNC). Ten were at feeders at Holywell and Druridge Bay C.P. and eight at Cresswell on 27th (ASJ/GB *et al.*). Eight were at feeders in Dinnington all month, six at East Ord and four at a Linden Hall garden. A single was noted at Druridge Pools on 14th.

**Grey Wagtail** *Motacilla cinerea*

Three were in Jesmond Dene on 12th(MJCo). Two were at Wallsend Dene, North Shields Fish Quay, Big Waters and Shankhouse during December, with singles at a further 14 sites.

**Pied Wagtail** *Motacilla alba yarrelli*

24 fed at East Chevington Burn mouth on 29th, with six there on 3rd(ASJ/GB *et al.*). 11 were at St Mary's on three dates, with seven present on nearby Whitley Bay beach on 20th (ASJ/MSH). One to five were at seven other locations.

**Meadow Pipit** *Anthus pratensis*

The mild winter allowing numbers to remain in the County saw 24 well inland at the normally vacated Alwin Valley on 30th (JR). 22 at West Stobswood on 27th, 13 at East Chevington on 5th, increasing to 27 birds on 18th (STH/DM/GB/MH). 11 at Prestwick Carr on 28th (PCF). Again, well inland five were seen at Plenmeller Common on 2nd (PRM). Five were at St. Mary's on 20th, with four there on 30th (ASJ/GB). Two flew SW on 12th at Newcastle Town Moor and singles were seen at two further inland sites at Quarry House Moor and Grindon on two dates and Widdrington Moor Lake on 27th.

**Rock Pipit** *Anthus petrosus*

Fourteen counted at Boulmer on 1st (PRM). 11-12+ were seen feeding at Whitley Bay beach / St. Mary's on several dates (ASJ/MSH). Four were at Beacon Point (Newbiggin) on 9th (STH). Three at Blyth S. Harbour on 12th (MSH). One or two were noted at a further three sites.



Rock Pipit at St. Mary's by Alan Jack

**Brambling** *Fringilla montifringilla*

Holywell Dene attracted the month's largest gathering with 25 on 9th increasing from 80-100 on 16th to 120 by 27th (SPP/ASJ/CGK/GPK). Elsewhere smaller numbers noted with 25 at Longhirst on 1st (MJC). One to six were observed at eight other sites.



**Chaffinch** *Fringilla coelebs*

A mere two reports this month, with eight birds noted at Lower Ouseburn (Byker) on 2nd and three in Jesmond Dene on 26th.

**Bullfinch** *Pyrrula pyrrula*

A good count of 16 was made on 5th at Swallow Pond (SPP). 12 were at Prestwick Carr on 17th (PCF) and seven there on 20th. Sixes were noted at Holywell Dene, Boghouses (Cramlington) and Arcot during the month and one to four noted at twelve further sites.

Groups of 11 and eight at Newburn and Derwent Reservoir on 22nd and 6th respectively were considered to be of the Northern race (IFo).

**Linnet** *Carduelis cannabina*

75 at Swallow Pond was the month's biggest reported group (SPP). 44 were at Needle's Eye (Berwick) on 8th (MHu). 35-40 were near Holywell Dene on 20th (ASJ). 25 noted at Druridge Bay on 27th (DM/GB/AB/LAR). 20 were at Big Waters on 20th (GB). Singles were reported at East Chevington on two dates.

**Twite** *Carduelis flavirostris*

25 frequented Widdrington Lake on 11th (AJR). 17 were seen at Teal Hole Point (Lindisfarne) on 13th (MH/AA). Eight were at Spital (Berwick) on 11th (MHu).

A Twite feeds a Druridge

Chris Barlow

**Lesser Redpoll** *Carduelis caberet*

22 were at Prestwick Carr on 3rd and singles were at Linden Hall on 18th, Widdrington Moor Lake on 27th and two were at Prestwick Carr on 17th.

**Crossbill** *Loxia curvirostra*

A two-hour walk through Harwood Forest on 27th revealed a total of eight birds (CB). Eight were also seen at Hepburn Woods on 17th, with seven there on 26th (ASJ/TRD/JD). Four birds were noted at two Rothbury sites towards the month end and singles were at three further sites during the month.

**Goldfinch** *Carduelis carduelis*

Two foraging flocks were noted with the largest at East Chevington of 120-150 in dunes on several dates (ASJ/GB/TRD/JD). Approximately the same number were at Needle's Eye (Berwick) on 8th (MHu). Around 52 attended garden feeders at East Ord on 24th (MHu). 35 were at a site in North Shields on 18th, with the same number at Cresswell dunes on 17th (CB/ASJ). 30 were at Widdrington Moor Lake on 27th (DM *et al.*). 14-26 were seen at three sites in Cramlington during the month (DM). One to 11 were at five further sites.

**Siskin** *Carduelis spinus*

A minimum of 50 were feeding at Derwent Reservoir on 6th and 40 near Fontburn on 30th (IFo/TD). About 30 noted on 2nd at Grindon (PRM). 25 were at Swallow Pond on 16th (GPK). Elsewhere one to ten at eight other sites.

**Snow Bunting** *Plectrophenax nivalis*

Scarce this month, with 13 birds flying S at East Chevington on 1st the only coastal record (PRM). Two were inland at Cottonshope Head (Otterburn Ranges) and a single bird looking incongruous, ran along the tree-lined road at Harwood village on 27th (JR/CB).



**Yellowhammer** *Emberiza citrinella*

An impressive flock of 83 fed in stubble at Callerton on 16th (MH). The following day, 15 did likewise with Reed Buntings at near Hepburn Woods (ASJ). Four at Derwent Reservoir on 12th were notable (IFo). Two noted in Corbridge on 10th (RB/MB). Singles were seen at Whittle Dene on 8th and 10th and at Middle Stobswood on 3rd (PRM/ASJ/GB).

**Reed Bunting** *Emberiza schoeniclus*

14 fed in stubble with Yellowhammers at Hepburn on 17th (ASJ). 12 were near Earsdon on 27th (CGK/GPK). Six were seen at Plenmeller Common on 2nd (PRM). Four were at Blyth South Harbour on 12th (MSH). One to two also at nine further sites.



A Reed Bunting on 3rd December  
East Chevington  
Janet Dean

**ESCAPES, HYBRIDS AND BIRDS OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN****Escapes****Bar-headed Goose** *Anser indicus*

Another sighting of this frequent escape with one seen from Harpe's Heugh near Budle Bay on 27th (MSH).

**Harris's Hawk** *Parabuteo unicinctus*

The frequent escape was again noted, this time at Forest Hall east of Benton in Newcastle on 26th (GB).

**Pale-headed Rosella** *Platycercus adscitus*

One was photographed on a feeder in the observer's garden in Manor Rd, Tynemouth on 4th (RD). A colourful addition to the regular garden birds.

**Hybrids****Tufted Duck x Pochard** *Aythya fuligula* x *Aythya ferina*

A drake was noted at Killingworth Lake on 5th (GB) which fitted this pairing well.

**Scaup x Pochard** *Aythya marila* x *Aythya ferina*

A female hybrid was seen at Big Waters on 4th (GB) which was thought perhaps to be this pairing as it had a flared black bill tip and small size of a Tufted Duck.



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## Apologies for any accidental omissions

## BULLETIN COMPILATION AND PRODUCTION

This bulletin was compiled by Graeme Bowman (Mute Swan to Ruddy Duck), Steve Laing (Red Grouse to Black-necked Grebe), Trevor Blake (Honey-buzzard to Crane), Tom Brewis (Avocet to Godwit), Clive Hampton (Turnstone to Skua), Eddie Crabtree (Puffin to Great Black-backed Gull), Tim Dean (Escapes, Hybrids and Unknown Origin, List of Contributors, Highlights), Peter Fletcher (Feral Pigeon to Red-rumped Swallow), Mike Richardson (Cetti's Warbler to Pied Flycatcher), Alan Jack (Dunnock to Corn Bunting), Kathy Evans (WeBS Coastal Counts) and Steve Holliday (WeBS Inland Counts).

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## RECORD SUBMISSION

Please email records for the month to [ntbc.records@googlemail.com](mailto:ntbc.records@googlemail.com)

Please email for a copy of the standard spreadsheet and other details.

Location names and grid references: Please use of standard location names and include grid references as this greatly increases the value of records in subsequent analyses. A 1km square grid reference is the ideal e.g. NY8067 for Grindon Lough, but 2km square references (tetrads) are also acceptable e.g. NY86D in this case. A list of localities and their tetrad grid references (tetrad/Locality List) can be downloaded from the 'Resources & Downloads' section of the Club website at <http://www.ntbc.org.uk> – the use of these names, wherever possible, would be highly appreciated.

Could club members ensure they to submit records direct to NTBC rather than just Birdtrack. There may be an assumption by some members this happens automatically. We do not want to miss records.

## PHOTOGRAPHS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Please keep submitting your articles, photographs, sketches and illustrations for the bulletin. Thanks again to those who have supplied the excellent photographs. Please send to Steve Barrett at [NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com](mailto:NTBCbulletin2012@gmail.com)

It is preferable if you re-size your photos before sending and a suggested size is 640 x 480 pixels. Please ensure you include the following information with your submissions: name, species, date taken, locality.

Photographs will not be used elsewhere without the photographer's permission.

## MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Annual membership costs £10 for a junior, £30 for an individual, and £32 for a family.

For membership enquiries please contact [ntbc@jobentley.plus.com](mailto:ntbc@jobentley.plus.com)

If you internet bank, you can pay online: please include your name in the ref. It is helpful if you email me to let me know when you've made the transfer [ntbc@jobentley.plus.com](mailto:ntbc@jobentley.plus.com)

If you decide to set up a standing order please date the first payment at least a fortnight from your posting date to allow time to process with the bank. You can also set up your standing order directly with your bank if you wish; just let me know.

Finally, if you know anyone who might like to join NTBC please pass on the club information - new members are always welcome.

## Jo Bentley - Hon Treasurer

## NTBC WEBSITE

The club website is an excellent online resource for anyone interested in birds. There are:

**Photo Galleries** – Here you can view hundreds of photos of birds from Northumberland, Newcastle and North Tyneside. Members are encouraged to contribute their own photos. Simply send them to [galleries@ntbc.org.uk](mailto:galleries@ntbc.org.uk)

**Sightings** – Here you can view reports of birds recently reported in the County. Anyone who would like to contribute and post sightings to this page, please email [sightings@ntbc.org.uk](mailto:sightings@ntbc.org.uk) Please note this section is moderated, so there may be a short delay before your record appears.

There are also County Checklists, Records Committee updates, Information on important Surveys, useful articles and reports on Bird ID and Overseas Birding Trips....and much more...

Please submit any other new content for the website to the main club email address at [ntbcorg@gmail.com](mailto:ntbcorg@gmail.com)

New content such as Birding Trip Reports etc.. is always welcome and very much appreciated.

To find out more please visit [www.ntbc.org.uk](http://www.ntbc.org.uk)



A drake Teal  
Howdon wetland  
Colin Bradshaw



